

THE
Parliamentary Register;
OR,
HISTORY
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
OF THE
HOUSES of LORDS and COMMONS.

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF

The most interesting **SPEECHES** and **MOTIONS**; accurate
Copies of all the **PROTESTS**, and of the most remarkable
LETTERS and **PAPERS**; together with the most material
EVIDENCE, **PETITIONS**, &c. laid before and offered to either
House,

DURING THE

FOURTH SESSION of the **EIGHTEENTH PARLIAMENT**

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

VOL. X.

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THE
HISTORY
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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
OF THE
HOUSES OF LORDS AND COMMONS,
In the FOURTH SESSION of the
Eighteenth Parliament of GREAT BRITAIN,
Appointed to be holden at WESTMINSTER,
On TUESDAY the 27th of SEPTEMBER, 1796.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, September 24, 1799.

HIS Majesty being seated on the Throne, adorned with his Crown and regal ornaments, and attended by his Officers of State (the Lords being in their robes), commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to let the Commons know, "It is His Majesty's pleasure they attend him immediately in this House;" who being come with their Speaker, His Majesty was pleased to speak as follows:

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I have called you together at this unusual season, in order to recommend it to you to consider of the propriety of enabling me, without delay, to avail myself, to a farther extent, of the voluntary services of the

Militia, at a moment when an increase of our active force abroad may be productive of the most important and beneficial consequences.

We have seen the happy effects of the measure which you adopted on this subject in the last Session; and the forces which I was thereby enabled to employ have already displayed, in the face of the enemy, a courage, discipline, and steadiness, worthy of the character of British soldiers.

In the short interval since the close of the last Session, our situation and prospects have, under the blessing of Providence, improved beyond the most sanguine expectation. The abilities and valour of the commanders and troops of the combined Imperial armies have continued to be eminently displayed. The deliverance of Italy may now be considered as secured, by the result of a campaign, equal in splendour and success to any the most brilliant recorded in history; and I have had the heart-felt satisfaction of seeing the valour of my fleets and armies successfully employed to the assistance of my allies, to the support of our just cause, and to the advancement of the most important interests of the British empire.

The kingdom of Naples has been rescued from the French yoke, and restored to the dominion of its lawful Sovereign, and my former connections with that Power have been renewed.

The French expedition to Egypt has been continued to be productive of calamity and disgrace to our enemies, while its ultimate views against our Eastern possessions have been utterly confounded. The desperate attempt which they have lately made to extricate themselves from their difficulties has been defeated by the courage of the Turkish forces, directed by the skill, and animated by the heroism of a British officer, with a small portion of my naval force under his command; and the overthrow of that restless and perfidious Power, who, instigated by the artifices, and deluded by the promises of the French, had entered into their ambitious and destructive projects in India, has placed the British interests in that quarter in a state of solid and permanent security.

The vigilance, decision, and wisdom of the Governor-general in Council, on this great and important occasion, and the tried abilities and valour of the commanders, officers, and troops employed under his direction, are entitled to my highest praise.

There is, I trust, every reason to expect that the effort which I am making for the deliverance of the United Provinces will prove successful. The British arms have rescued from the possession of the enemy the principal port and naval arsenal of the Dutch Republic; and although we have to regret the loss of many brave men in a subsequent attack against the enemy, whose position enabled them to obstruct our progress, I have the strongest ground to expect that the skill of my Generals, and the de-

terminated resolution and intrepidity of my troops, and of those of my allies, will soon surmount every obstacle; and that the fleet which, under the usurped dominion of France, was destined to co-operate in the invasion of these islands, may speedily, I trust, under its antient standard, partake in the glory of restoring the religion, liberty, and independence of these provinces so long in intimate union and alliance with this country.

While you rejoice with me in the events which add so much lustre to the British character, you will, I am persuaded, as cordially join in the sentiments so justly due to the conduct of my good and faithful ally the Emperor of Russia; to his magnanimity and wisdom, directing to so many quarters of Europe the force of his extensive and powerful empire, we are, in a great degree, indebted for the success of our own efforts, as well as for the rapid and favourable change in the general situation of affairs. I have directed copies to be laid before you of those engagements, which have consolidated and cemented a connection so consonant to the permanent interests of my empire, and so important at the present moment to every part of the civilized world.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

The ample supplies which you have granted to me, in the course of the last Session, will, I trust, so nearly provide for the exigencies of the public service, even on the extensive scale which our present operations require, as to enable me, without farther aid, to continue those exertions to the close of the present year:—But in order to afford you the convenience of a longer recess, I recommend it to you to consider of providing for the expence which will be necessary in the early part of the ensuing year; and with this view I have ordered the proper estimates to be laid before you.

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

In pursuance of your recommendation, I judged it proper to communicate to my two Houses of Parliament in Ireland, at the close of their last Session, the sentiments which you had expressed to me respecting an incorporating Union with that kingdom. The experience of every day confirms me in the persuasion that signal benefit would be derived to both countries from that important measure; and I trust that the disposition of my Parliament there will be found to correspond with that which you have manifested for the accomplishment of a work which would tend so much to add to the security and happiness of all my Irish subjects, and to consolidate the strength and prosperity of the empire.

His Majesty and the House of Commons then retired; and after the speech had been read by the Lord Chancellor on the woolsack, and the clerk at the table,

The Marquis of BUCKINGHAM rose to move an address to His Majesty for his most gracious speech from the Throne. He observed, that he felt it incumbent on him to call the attention of their Lordships to some of the leading points in the speech from the Throne which they had just heard read, and in this view what struck him most forcibly were the just and well-founded allusions which were made to the steadiness and bravery of the British troops in the late glorious exploits upon the Continent, in which these levies taken from that part of the British forces to which he had the honour to belong, bore so distinguished and honourable a share. Yet it was not their conduct in action which most merited his approbation; when he contemplated the alacrity and spirit with which they entered themselves for foreign service, their merits in his mind were considerably enhanced. Though he could not withhold the honest tribute of his testimony to their deserts, yet their conduct was no matter of surprise to him, who had been so long a witness of their zeal, discipline, and courage. Having said thus much, he would beg leave to press to their Lordships' attention the obvious good policy of pursuing our late brilliant successes in the most solid and effectual manner, by fully and expeditiously adopting the measures recommended in the speech from the Throne. By such a mode, he was of opinion that our late successes could be most efficaciously followed up. He did not, however, think that under the present circumstances of the nation, such measures could properly create the slightest degree of anxiety or alarm in the mind of any noble Lord. Circumstances, he thought, had recently occurred, which indeed rendered it proper to make some material alterations in the Militia establishments: by the complete subjugation of the Dutch navy, there no longer existed a necessity for a fleet in the North Sea, nor for a powerful Military force to be cantoned along our Northern and Eastern coasts. These may be considered as perfectly secure. It would be politic, however, to avail ourselves in other quarters of the forces which would be thus free to act in any other shape, and proceeding in that manner, he deemed it best to do it through the medium of the Militia corps. In this part of the question, his Lordship observed, that it struck him, that the present national circumstances would even warrant a reduction of the Militia force to its original establishment in point of numbers: That, he said, was settled about forty years ago; and the establishment secured to us an invaluable medium of national defence. He thought it more than possible, that the like number now would be fully adequate to all the purposes for which the Militia was instituted. By the adoption of the measure he alluded to, the nation would be placed in a

greater degree of security, by being enabled to follow up hostile operations, to cement our continental alliance, and to meet the exertions of the enemy, and, above all, to recover one of our oldest and most valuable alliances. But to dismiss, or to disembody such a large part of the Militia force, would be obviously unwise and impolitic, in that the power was given to Government of availing itself of such voluntary offers as might be made from such disbanded troops, to serve in another manner. The act of the 12th of July did not go far enough, it was too limited. A measure of the nature proposed did not appear to him to involve the slightest breach of parliamentary faith; such a consideration was to him one of the most serious nature. He had served too long in the Militia, and was too well acquainted with the institution, not to know that the parliamentary compact, by which they were raised, was the very essence of the whole; nay, even the corner stone on which the whole superstructure was built. He would repeat, that, did he conceive the proposed measure to involve the slightest dereliction from the principles on which the Militia was originally raised, no consideration whatever would induce him to support, or take part in such a measure. Recurring again to the point of a farther reduction of the Militia, he proceeded to expatiate upon the policy of availing ourselves of the farther voluntary offers from any of those who might wish to join their gallant comrades; and so strongly was he impressed with these ideas, that he should hold himself culpable, did he not, under the circumstances of the present moment, support such a proposition to the utmost of his power. He requested the pardon of the House for detaining their Lordships so long on this point of the speech, it was one of those on which he felt most interested.

The noble Marquis then adverted to the other prominent topics of His Majesty's speech, respecting which, he lamented his inability to follow the animated detail, in language and in a manner commensurate to the subjects alluded to. The events of the late campaign were such as called for our most grateful acknowledgments to Providence, for its manifest interference in a cause undertaken in defence of religion and its laws; and though no one particular point in the brilliant detail could with perfect justice be selected for peculiar commendation, yet he felt himself irresistibly called upon to advert to a few of its leading features. And first, he would call the consideration of their Lordships to the wanton and unprincipled aggression made by the common enemy of all religion and governments upon a Power with whom they were then in the relations of peace and amity, by an attack upon one of its distant provinces,

Egypt ; but in which nefarious-attempt they were most disgracefully baffled by the unexampled gallantry of a handful of British seamen, aided by the uninformed bravery of a few Turkish soldiers, but led on by an officer of such talent and bravery as he thought merited the most grateful acknowledgments from his country.—[A cry of “Hear ! hear !”]—Indeed, when he contemplated the exploit in question, he was lost in admiration. He then adverted to the recent operations in India, and spoke in the highest strain of commendation of those Councils, and the military gallantry, by which the usurper Tippoo Saib was humbled to the dust. But his admiration did not solely rest on that ground. It was not alone the conduct and the equal courage of the British soldiery in the East that called for his admiration, but the humanity and discipline which pervaded the troops, and converted them in a moment from assailants and enemies, to the protectors of the persons and properties of the vanquished.

Much personal friendship and regard as he felt for the noble Lord Mornington, who was at the head of affairs in India, and for his noble and worthy coadjutor Lord Clive, he trusted that the commendations which then fell from him on those exalted characters, would not be imputed to these motives ; they solely arose from their own very meritorious conduct ; and upon the whole of the late operations in India, he was uncertain whether the superior gallantry of our countrymen was more strongly manifested, than the degree of lustre thrown upon the British character for forbearance and humanity.

His Lordship then pointed the attention of the House to those parts of the speech which referred to the magnanimous and politic conduct of our illustrious ally the Emperor of Russia. He dwelt in strains of eulogium upon the wise and energetic measures adopted by that Prince, and upon his departing from that fatal and temporising policy entertained by his predecessor. He detailed the exertions of that potentate in the cause against the common enemy ; the march of his troops from the remotest corners of his vast empire to the very frontiers of France ; the general energy which he manifested, and the exertion of all his powers in the benevolent cause of asserting the independence of Europe, and saving it from the tyranny of France. His Lordship then passed to the affairs of the sister kingdom ; the disadvantage of her present situation ; her still existing distraction ; and concluded by expressing his conviction that the popular sentiment in favour of an Union with this country was daily gaining ground. Even the peasantry themselves now, he observed, looked forward to the measure in the hopes of relief from it,

For his own part, he was decidedly of opinion, that the most fortunate event which possibly could occur to Ireland, would be a complete, equal, and entire Union with Great Britain. His Lordship then presented the address, which was read at the table.

Lord AMHERST rose and said :—My Lords, the speech of the noble mover of this address has added to the difficulty and embarrassment which I naturally feel in obtruding myself, for the first time, upon your Lordships' attention. The weight and importance which belongs to every thing that comes from a person of his consequence in this country, would of itself be sufficient to intimidate me, when I am to follow him upon an occasion of such magnitude. But in addition to this consideration, the manner in which he has anticipated almost all the topics suggested in the speech from the Throne, upon which I should have felt it my duty to trouble your Lordships very shortly, has left me little excuse for troubling you at all ; and it is some comfort to me, that in proportion as he has increased the difficulty, in the same proportion he has diminished the necessity for my trespassing upon the patience of this House.

Upon those particular points which form the main ground of the reasons for the present calling together of Parliament, points upon which the noble Marquis's particular situation enable him to speak with so much information and authority, I shall not presume to offer any thing in addition to his arguments. Certainly no man is better qualified to speak of the importance of the services which the Militia of this country has rendered to the empire at large, of the zeal and alacrity with which those services have been offered, than one who was among the first to bring forward and give animation and effect to that alacrity and zeal, and who has borne so large a share in those services for which they are entitled to the thanks and the gratitude of their country. Certainly no man can be less suspected of a design to degrade or sacrifice that distinguished branch of the public defence, than one who has laboured so earnestly and so successfully to bring it to that pitch of credit and of glory at which it is now arrived.

Leaving, therefore, to your Lordships' judgment the consideration of the measure as it affects the Militia itself, I hope to be forgiven if I endeavour to obviate such general objections as it is impossible, in the common intercourse of society, not to have heard stated ; all which, however, appear susceptible of easy, and, as it strikes me, satisfactory answers.

And, first, with respect to the general state of the defence and means of this country, and the alledged inconsistency of this measure of offensive operation, with the limited scale of military exer-

tion, and with that of our annual expenditure—undoubtedly the first and most essential object is to be able to hold out so long as France shall continue what she is in power and in enmity to this country, and in general hostility to all the other governments of the world. Undoubtedly the only certain method of securing this ability is to limit our exertions to such a point, that even if the whole world should fail us, and if we should be left again, as heretofore we have been left to fight the battles of the world and our own alone, we should be able to stand the contest for any period, however uncertain and undefined.

But though it be indispensable that we should not exhaust our means so as to run the risque of falling below this point at any time, and though the duration of our efforts be much more to be considered than their positive forces at any particular period, yet it does not follow, the end of all these efforts being the surviving the present inordinate power and ambition of France, that if the same end can be accomplished by so doing, we should not take any reasonable chance of shortening the period of our duration by any extraordinary temporary effort. When circumstances appeared to open a sudden prospect of more vigorous exertion on the part of the Powers of the Continent; when the oppressions of the people whom France had overrun, appeared ready to rouse a proper spirit of opposition to the oppressors, when in the interior of France herself were discovered evident symptoms of debility and distraction, it would have been a narrow and pedantic adherence to system, which should have forbidden our improving to the utmost a moment so propitious; and it would have been an ill-judged economy, which should have grudged a temporary exertion beyond the scale of our settled system, for the chance of accomplishing the end of that system so much the sooner—not that the exertion could in its nature be so long and lasting as to alter the complexion of our system, or disable us at any time from recurring to it.

Another objection, not unfrequently started, is the general impolicy of Great Britain ever interfering in Continental war. If by this assertion be meant only that Great Britain can never have an interest in undertaking foreign conquests for the sake of acquiring territory and dominion on the Continent, nothing can be more true. If it be meant that this country can never have its interests so implicated with those of other Powers as to feel itself essentially concerned in the success of one or other Power, and in the preservation or restoration of the balance of Europe, all history, especially all the history of the good times of this country, proves the contrary of such an assertion. It must be intended then to assert, that what-

ever be our interest in the wars of the Continent, our physical situation prevents us from ever taking part in them.

No doubt physical circumstances must, to a certain degree, limit the exertions of every country. But who shall draw the line where the power of exertion ends? Who, for instance, if he had been called upon at the beginning of the present war to estimate the efforts and the sacrifices which this country could make in the course of it, would not have been startled at the idea of one half of what actually has been done and borne cheerfully? What if two years ago, when the funding system was shaking under us, we had listened to the prophecies of those who told us it must inevitably fall, and that we could substitute nothing in its room? And yet, who would forego the now tried and ascertained advantage of a system of finance which nothing, perhaps, but the pressure of the times would have led us to try, and nothing but the spirit of the nation rising in proportion to the pressure would have enabled to succeed? What if, when at the same period the threat of invasion impended, we had acquiesced in the statement, true undoubtedly to a certain degree, that we were without an army, and that we had not the means of internal defence? Yet look round our coast now, and find, if you can, the spot where an invading enemy could hope to make impression, where he would not be met by a portion of an army, for its spirit equalled, perhaps, by few, and excelled by none of the Powers of the Continent?

Who is there among the political economists of this or any former age, that if it had been foretold to them, that after having subdued and trampled into submission, or awed into fear, the greater part of Europe, France, rich in population, gigantic in power, elated with a series of conquests almost undisputed, and enriched with the wealth of plundered kingdoms, should fit out an expedition with the choicest of her troops, the most skilful of her generals, the whole strength of her marine, and should bend this expedition against the territories of a Power mighty in name and size, but feeble and defenceless from want of exertion—Who, if they had told, that against this formidable armament none of the nations apparently most interested should bestir themselves, that it should proceed unmolested to the execution of its enterprize, with half the world, if not favouring, at least afraid to oppose them—Who, if they had been told, that from an island in a distant ocean, containing not one third of the population of the country which fitted out the enterprize, not one tenth of the population of the empire against which it was sent, and of the kingdoms and states interested in preventing its success, but which were standing around

in torpid and hopeless admiration of the plans destined for their own ruin—that from this island should come the stroke which should lay prostrate the pride and hopes of this great enterprize—that the spirit of this petty island should go forth to blast it in its outset, should pursue it in its progress, check it at every turn, and ultimately extinguish and overwhelm it—Who of the grave calculators of population and physical strength would not have said, that the event was in itself utterly out of nature, that the attempt would be frantic and fruitless, and that for a country so situated as this is, to stretch its arm so far would be to exhaust its strength in one effort without end or meaning? And yet what is the whole history of the discomfiture of this wanton and flagitious enterprize of the French from the memorable battle of Aboukir to the almost incredible events of the siege of Acre, but a series of proofs of the prowess and strength of this country?—a strength not proportioned to the calculable powers of physical ability—a prowess which has placed the name and character of this comparatively small and insignificant part of the world upon a pinnacle of glory to which the greatest and the proudest, and most powerful empires of the world look up with wonder and admiration.

What if, in addition to the obvious and immediate objects of an enterprize in itself so gigantic and tremendous as that of Buonaparte, one of its effects was to be to cut off one of the great sources of our national power, by instigating the native Powers of India to avail themselves of its co-operation to overthrow the empire of this country in the East?—Would not this afford, to the statistical examiner of the possible efforts of this island, an additional ground for distrusting the possibility of our standing the contest? And what would be his astonishment when he heard, that within the same year in which so splendid a series of victories enabled us to confound the pride and power of our enemy in Europe, in the same year, but within the period of a single campaign, of a few weeks, the army of this country (poor in exertion, and powerless as it might be supposed) had not saved only the empire of which we were in possession, not repelled only the attacks made upon them, but carried war into the heart of the dominions of the aggressor, and reduced and finally extinguished his power and name for ever!—What if, in addition to this picture, were to be presented to the view of the philosopher, who was measuring possible achievements by population and physical strength, the whole course of the Mediterranean campaign—the salvation of Naples—and, finally, what has actually been achieved by the spirit of our troops in Holland?—Is there any one of these things less apparently beyond our strength than the farther efforts which it

is now proposed to make? Is there any ground from this statement to decline these farther efforts from the fear of their being more than we can hope to accomplish?

But it will be asked, are we then to be led aside from the sober and safe system of our own national security by a desire of military glory?

My Lords, I confess that for my own part I find it impossible to contemplate all that has been done by the arms of England abroad, to look at empires saved, at kingdoms restored, at hostile fleets and armies swept from the face of the globe, at the support of friendly and the extermination of hostile Powers; and all this, achieved as it has been, in many instances, by the single arm of Great Britain—or, turning from this prospect, to look at the proud and inspiring array of armies embattled for the defence of our Sovereign and our Country—without feeling, I hope, a just and blameless pride in the military strength and glory of Great Britain—without feeling it a matter of self-congratulation, that the calumny, which not many years ago was so common in the mouth of our vaunting enemy, which often was almost tacitly admitted by ourselves, the imputation that our commercial prosperity had depressed and overlaid our martial spirit, stands refuted in the face of the world, and, what is of more real importance, in our own conscious feelings—without rejoicing that the British character is not so softened and enervated by the unexampled blessings we so pre-eminently enjoy, but that we have still the sense to know, that by the same virtue and valour which originally won them to us, by these alone can they securely be maintained—that though the steady and settled course of justice and law, the arts of peaceful industry and flourishing commerce, make war almost unknown to us as a profession, we have nevertheless not forgotten that the spirit to defend is essential in exact proportion to the value of what is to be defended.

But though it is impossible to repress these feelings of proud and honest satisfaction, it is by no means by the impulse of military glory alone that we could be justified in engaging in a new mode of war, unless the object of our continental expeditions were precisely the same with that which animates exertions in all other parts of the system, that is, the upholding the independence of this country, and, so far as the common interests of this country and others go together, the liberties and independence of Europe.

I know that there is another strong prejudice against all continental operations whatsoever, that they link us too closely with continental Powers; that they render us dependent on the fidelity of allies, to whom we look for co-operation; and that such a plan

of action, once entered upon, leads to indefinite and complicated engagements, in which the interests of Great Britain are not unfrequently neglected. Not to trust too far to foreign Powers, where they have an obvious interest in deceiving, or a manifest temptation to betray, is certainly a matter of no doubtful policy. But surely it is no less unwise, on the other hand, to reject all co-operation, which may be useful so far as it goes, because it may not go throughout by the same road, or to the same end, to which our views are directed.

But if ever there was a case of continental operation in which this caution would not apply, and in which suspicion would seem to be misplaced, it is the present; where the contest is for an object confessedly touching Great Britain more nearly than any other continental object, the liberation of our old ally from the yoke of our inveterate enemy; where, in the course of our present success, so far as it has gone, we have already effected an object so purely British, and so great in its extent, that in former times it would have been considered alone as the great and marking feature of a campaign, or even of a war—the capture of the Dutch fleet; and where the ally co-operating with us, besides being that Power which, from the unexampled magnanimity and liberality of its conduct, has best deserved to be exempted from all suspicion of selfish, much more of treacherous dispositions, besides being that Power to which one third of that part of Europe which France had subjugated already owes its deliverance, is that which has, perhaps, the least visible interest of any of the Powers whom we could have associated in our enterprize, except so far as every power, and every nation, and every sovereign, and every man in civilized Europe, has a common and mutual interest in the success of every measure which tends to the diminution of the dominion of French power, of the influence of French principles, and the operation and tenor of French arms.

For an object, therefore, in its general nature so essentially interesting to this country, touching at once so nearly its honour and its power—for an object already so splendidly begun, and which a vigorous perseverance may bring at no great distance of time to a successful issue, we can have no scruple in using our best endeavours to give every additional strength to the arms of the country, and every support which they deserve to those who have so gallantly opened the career of glory to their countrymen. And it cannot be entertained as any material objection to resorting to voluntary zeal for the augmentation of force which is now in question, that to zeal of the same description we are indebted for the preservation of the

internal peace of this kingdom. That voluntary zeal has saved Ireland to this kingdom and to herself; and I doubt not that the same zeal, if permitted to exert itself, will restore Holland to her alliance with this empire, in restoring her to her rank among the nations of the world. My Lords, impressed with these sentiments, I beg leave to second the Address, as moved by the noble Marquis.

Lord ROMNEY.—I do not rise, my Lords, for the purpose of giving the smallest opposition to the Address, so ably moved by the noble Marquis, and so eloquently seconded by the noble Lord who has just sat down. I wish only to mention to your Lordships a difference of opinion, which I hold, contrary to that delivered by the noble Marquis in the course of his speech, relative to the old and the supplementary Militia. I cannot view the supplementary Militia to be on the same footing and foundation as the old Militia. I look upon the supplementary Militia as the mere creature of the present war—the old Militia, on the contrary, I esteem as woven with the Constitution; and I beg to remind your Lordships that it is the only standing body of men that in this country has ever been voted perpetual. With respect to all that has been said by the noble Marquis, and the noble Lord who seconded the motion, as to every other point, I agree with them entirely; and I only mention this to your Lordships, to avoid being charged with inconsistency on any future occasion in which I may differ with the noble Marquis on that point, from my having agreed to the present Address.

The question on the Address was then put, and it was carried *nem. diss.*; and the Lords, with white staves, were ordered to learn His Majesty's pleasure when he should please to be waited on with it.

Lord GRENVILLE moved, that there be laid before the House copies of the correspondence between the Governor-General of India and the other Presidencies with the Court of Directors, relative to the war with Tippo Sultaun, from the arrival of the Earl of Mornington in India, to the latest advices received, inclusive. These, he said, were for the purpose of giving their Lordships the necessary information respecting the late war in India, and by which its principles, and the grounds on which it was undertaken (being merely defensive on the part of the British), would be fully illustrated. Not only this, but the conduct of his noble friend the Earl of Mornington, who so worthily presided in the Governments of those dominions, would appear in a still more favourable and meritorious light than could be collected from what was already before the public; and also that of the commanding officers of the fleets and

armies in that quarter, respecting which, on a future day, he intended to submit a motion to their Lordships. The production of the above papers was then ordered.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, September 24, 1799.

A message from His Majesty was delivered by Sir Francis Molyneux, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod :—

MR. SPEAKER,

The King commands this Honourable House to attend His Majesty immediately in the House of Peers.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, with the House, went up to attend His Majesty ; and being returned,

A bill for the more effectual preventing clandestine outlawries was read a first time.

Resolved, that this bill be read a second time.

Mr. Speaker then reported, that the House had attended His Majesty in the House of Peers, where His Majesty was pleased to make a most gracious speech from the Throne to both Houses of Parliament : of which, Mr. Speaker said, he had, to prevent mistakes, obtained a copy, which he read to the House. (*For which, see the Proceedings of the Lords.*)

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE rose to move an Address to His Majesty ; and after expressing his inability to do justice to the great achievements, both naval and military, which had taken place since the opening of the campaign, he observed he had at least the satisfaction of knowing, that exploits so glorious required no eloquence to enhance their value—no panegyric to increase their importance ; they carried with them their own eulogium, and spoke their praises to this country, and to the world, in terms more forcible than all the powers of language could possibly proclaim them ; and amidst the splendour of such a train of victories, it was difficult to select those which were best entitled to the applause and gratitude of the country. He then described the gallant efforts of the Archduke, the successes of Marshal Suwarrow, and the essential services of Captain Trowbridge in the territory of Naples ; and to all these collectively we might ascribe the deliverance of Italy from the degrading yoke of France.

That important as this deliverance was to the general interests of Europe, it had been equalled, if not surpassed, in another quarter of

the globe, by a series of conquests won by our own arms—the entire defeat of Tippoo Sultaun's army, the capture of Seringapatam, and the destruction of a treacherous foe, who, while he professed peace and amity towards us, had actually confederated himself with another perfidious disturber of the world (Buonaparte), to effect our total extirpation from the territories of India. That happily the victory there was exclusively our own, and might in its effects be considered as having placed the British interests in that country in a state of solid and permanent security. That great praise was due to the Governor-General in Council, and to the Commanders in Chief, for their vigilance and cordial co-operation during that short but severe contest.

He then described in strong colours the unwearied efforts of Sir Sidney Smith, in resisting and ultimately defeating Buonaparte's superior force; yet our successes do not stop there: we cannot but applaud the first operations and progress of the grand armament in Holland; to the naval talents of a Mitchell we are indebted for keeping together and collecting a very numerous fleet in a dangerous sea during two successive and severe storms. To his judicious arrangements we owe the surrender of that fleet which, under the usurped dominion of France, was destined to co-operate in the invasion of these islands.

Nor ought we to forget how essentially our brave army has contributed to this last success: they have obtained for us the dominion by the possession of Helder; for them was reserved the glory of taking those forts and batteries which had hitherto been considered as impregnable. If such have been the important advantages already obtained, can we hesitate a moment to improve them? The naval force of that enemy is no longer at their command; with its usurpers we have now only to contend on shore. Surely then our military force in that quarter ought to be strengthened by all possible means; fortunately for us, those means are at hand. The mode of accomplishing an object so essential was adopted at the close of the last session; it was adopted, too, with a degree of success far exceeding our most sanguine expectations. The warlike spirit of our Militia, too long confined within the pale of mere defence, was then for the first time suffered to expand; and how flattering has it been to the military pride of this country to know, that the zeal and ardor of her Militia surpassed all previous conjecture; that in many regiments a larger portion than the limited number stood forward as volunteers; that in some regiments there was not a man who did not declare himself ready to fight for his King and Country, wherever his services might be most beneficially employed!

But that statute passed, our vast Militia force, however proper and necessary at a former period of the war, was becoming daily less and less so, and the country was burdened with an army of defence, while its regular forces could scarce be recruited on any terms. The act alluded to was admirably framed for giving relief in both these difficulties—by reducing that defensive force, and at the same time converting it into an army ready for offensive service within any part of Europe. If such have been the benefits arising from this act, why are we not to avail ourselves of them to a farther extent? The formidable defensive array of the country increased within a short period to such an honourable extent, renders it unnecessary to keep up a greater body of Militia than its original number, about 30,000—Why then not convert all above that number into troops of the line (with their own free consent, and for a limited service), and thus at once create a powerful, well-disciplined, disposable army, ready for all European service, and zealous to share the glory of their gallant comrades, who have already displayed in the face of the enemy a degree of courage, discipline, and steadiness, worthy the character of British soldiers?

After some farther observations on this subject, he concluded with congratulating the House on the present improved situation and flattering prospects of the country. How delightful is it to witness, as we daily and hourly must do, the prosperous state of our public credit, the flourishing sources of our revenue, our commerce increased beyond all precedent of former times! Surely the enjoyment of these blessings is of itself an encouragement to persevere in the same line of conduct which has obtained them for us. Much indeed, on all these accounts, we owe to the firmness and vigour of Parliament—much to the wisdom and energy of His Majesty's Councils—much to the solid good sense of the nation at large; but the main pillars of our prosperity and salvation have been, and ever must be, *attachment to our Country, loyalty to our King, and devotion to our God!* May that God still go forth with our fleets and armies, and continue to bless us with victory and success!

Colonel ELFORD said, that in rising to second the Address, it certainly gave him the greatest pleasure to find, that the very excellent speech the House had just heard, had rendered it unnecessary for him to enter at all largely into any of those topics which would naturally have presented themselves to his mind, had he not been preceded by his honourable friend, who had so ably and so amply adverted to them; that in speaking of the events which have occurred since the close of the last session of Parliament, the honourable Member had only to record a continual series of successes in

various parts of the globe—these successes had been so obvious, that it would be wasting the time of the House to insist farther on them; and that he should best evince his sense of the effectual manner in which his honourable friend had represented them, by intruding for a very short time on the patience of the House, and only for the purpose of adverting to a few circumstances of a local nature, which the situations he had been in, had placed within his observation. In discussing the principal feature of His Majesty's most gracious speech, "the recommendation of our considering the propriety of a farther reduction of the Militia forces, with a view to increase the power of prosecuting our late successes," it was impossible not to advert to the advantages which have already accrued from the voluntary services of that body. When His Majesty was empowered to accept of the offer made by many Militia corps to serve in Ireland, much was said of the attack that was made on the constitutional force of the country, and many predictions and assertions were made, that the ruin of that body would be the inevitable consequence of the measure, but that he had never heard any facts or arguments urged in support of these assertions that were at all satisfactory to his mind, and nothing had hitherto occurred that could justify them; that had he entertained any such apprehensions, he, for one, should certainly neither have countenanced or promoted it; that he did not mean to say, nor did he believe, the warmest well-wishers of that measure had ever been weak or absurd enough to assert that no inconveniences would attend the adoption of it; that he had himself seen and felt some inconveniences which had arisen from it; but where was to be found any great political operation, in which all the benefits were on one side, and all the evils on the other? In questions of this kind they must be balanced, and that plan be chosen which on the whole should be found most eligible and beneficial. That in this way of considering it, he had no hesitation in asserting it as his most firm and rooted belief, that the advantages which had arisen from sending regiments of the British Militia to Ireland were beyond all calculation—that every day's experience and observation increased this conviction in his mind, and that he should always consider the assistance (small as it must have been from so unimportant an individual as himself) which he was enabled to afford in the execution of that measure, as the act in his life on which he ought to look back with the greatest pleasure. That if we considered it merely as an accession of 12,000 men to the military force already in that kingdom, it was no inconsiderable object at that critical moment, and had tended very materially to damp the hopes of the disaffected: added to which, their exemplary conduct and behaviour made them as much

respected in their characters of citizens, as their discipline and subordination rendered them an object of apprehension in a military view. But there was still another and more material benefit derived from it: A rumour had been most maliciously and most industriously circulated among those deluded people who were engaged in that unnatural rebellion, that persons in corresponding ranks of life with themselves in this island were not only well wishers to the cause in which they were embarked, but were ready to assist them in it whenever an opportunity should offer; and this opinion was so fondly entertained and so deeply rooted in their minds, that no arguments or persuasions could eradicate it. But when they saw a large body of those very persons arrive in Ireland, under no doubtful character as to their principles, not even sent thither to perform a duty they were bound to execute, but having voluntarily offered their services to assist in suppressing the rebellion, of which the malcontents had been taught to believe them the favourers and abettors, all future hopes of co-operation from this country were completely done away in the only mode in which that effect could have been produced; and for these reasons, he again repeated it as his most firm belief, that the presence of the British Militia in Ireland did most materially tend, in co-operation with His Majesty's other forces, and under the favour of Divine Providence, to suppress the rebellion, and to save that then unhappy country.

With respect to the measure that was adopted at the close of the last session, by which volunteers from the Militia were permitted to enter into the army, it would be unnecessary for him to speak much, as it had already been amply adverted to by his honourable friend, and the brilliant successes which had resulted from it were so recent, that they must be present to the mind of every honourable Member; it would also be recollected that these glorious exploits could not have been achieved, nor the expedition itself have been undertaken, but for this rapid mode of recruiting the army—that it must afford a very great gratification to the House to have been informed, that the conduct of the volunteers on this occasion was most exemplary, and that he could not speak more highly in praise of their valour and intrepidity, than by stating that in the day of battle they were not found unworthy associates of those veteran sailors and soldiers, who had so often distinguished themselves in the service of their country;—it was owing to their united efforts, that the Dutch fleet was surrendered into our keeping, and he feared not to assert, that if that circumstance only had been the fruit of our expedition, it would have proved an ample recompence for it. That as, however, it was impossible to doubt the advan-

tages which had already accrued from this measure, or those which were likely to arise from an extension of it, the only question was, whether they might be overbalanced by any concomitant evils?—That he certainly, for one, did not think they would, and most confidently believed, that the apprehensions which had been entertained on the subject would be found wholly groundless. Gentlemen would consider what was the real state of the case: When two years ago, extensive and formidable preparations were making by the enemy for the invasion of this country, it was found necessary to embody sixty thousand men, as supplementary to the established Militia, as well as various other kinds of military corps, by which the power of recruiting the army was necessarily diminished. In the progress of events the danger of invasion subsided, the necessity of a large defensive force had been done away, and the importance of a more powerful offensive one had occurred. Would gentlemen, under these circumstances, wish to see kept up a vast establishment at an immense expence which we did not want; and if otherwise, would they not wish to derive from the dissolution of it, that kind of force which we did want? If it should be said that it is unprecedented to recruit the army from the Militia, it may be answered that the circumstances under which it is done are also unprecedented—We had never before now seen the Militia of the country so vastly increased beyond the establishment; and while therefore the number of that establishment should remain sacred and undiminished, and he trusted no one would ever be hardy enough to propose a diminution of that most useful, most respectable, and most constitutional body, he could not see what evil could attend a farther extension of those measures by which we had already so materially benefited. It had been said, that gentlemens' feelings would be hurt,—that this mode of recruiting would disgrace the officers of the Militia, by converting them into drill-serjeants for the army; but that he could scarcely believe this had ever been seriously urged, or that, if it had been said in a moment of warmth, any officer would be really actuated by it. Nothing ought to be deemed disgraceful or degrading which, with a view to terminate the war, was not in itself dishonourable; and surely no man would think himself dishonoured in having an opportunity afforded him of contributing by his exertions to procure a speedy and honourable peace for his country, to which this measure appeared directly to tend.

Of the general prosperity of the country, it was unnecessary for him to speak in addition to what had already been said; that he certainly did feel with the honourable gentleman who had moved the Address, and he doubted not with every other Member of the

House, the highest gratification from the improved prospect of our affairs in various parts of the globe, arising from the wise measures which had been planned, and the gallantry and intrepidity with which they had been executed by the forces of His Majesty and his allies; and that when he considered what had been, and what was still likely to be effected, by the wisdom, the fortitude, and the perseverance, which had marked the Councils of this Nation;—when he had seen Great Britain, forsaken and alone, stemming that torrent of rapine, devastation, anarchy, and impiety, with which a part of Europe had been overwhelmed, and the whole civilized world had been threatened, and forming the point round which other nations had rallied in support of their rights, their liberties, and their religion, he could not but feel a conscious pride in having been born in such a country, and at such a time, and in knowing that, however great and illustrious the character of the British nation had heretofore been, its glory had never shone with so bright a splendour as at this present period. He trusted that this train of successes would warrant us in looking, not very remotely, to that great object of His Majesty's paternal care and sollicitude, for which alone this, or any other war, could be justly maintained. We had more than once, during the course of it, seen negotiations fruitlessly attempted, and, perhaps, entered into, in consequence of the clamours that were industriously raised among the people, without any very sanguine hopes of success having been entertained by those who had the best means of appreciating the enemy's dispositions. The events proved, that those who thought so were not mistaken. The whole negotiations, if they deserved that name, consisted on the part of the enemy, in evasive attempts to frustrate their professed objects, and in endeavours to throw the odium of the failure on this country. With this view, the conferences consisted, on their parts, of demands which they knew could not be granted, and of insults which they knew would not be borne. They succeeded in one part of their scheme, by breaking off the treaties; but in the other they so miserably failed, that the effects of their malicious intentions recoiled ten-fold on themselves; for, instead of loading this country with any opprobrium, they so effectually developed their own designs, that there was not an individual in this, or any part of Europe, who might not have discovered them; and it might be truly said, that the conduct of the French, at the last of these negotiations, tended more powerfully to unite the people of this country, and to rouse other nations against them, than any circumstance which had theretofore happened during the war.

He said, that he hoped, and, indeed, had no doubt when the

period of negotiation should arrive, and when this triumphant nation should find herself in a situation rather to dictate than to receive the terms of pacification, that far from imitating this conduct of our enemies, we should shew as bright an example of temperance and moderation in our prosperity, as we had already done of magnanimity and real fortitude in contrary circumstances, and that we should be guided by no other ambition, than that of securing the general prosperity of the empire, by a safe, an honourable, and a permanent peace. That the means tending most effectually to this great object would be, by a vigorous prosecution of the war, and convincing the enemy by our preparations and exertions, that we were determined to carry it on, as long as their obstinacy and folly should render it necessary. These means and these exertions would be best found in an extension of that measure, which was recommended from the Throne, to which he should therefore give his warmest support, as the Address had his most cordial approbation.

The Speaker having read the Address, which was moved and seconded,

Mr. JOLLIFFE said, he was perfectly disposed to give credit to those who had brought about the great events which had of late increased the splendour of the country; he, however, could not attribute the whole merit to the army and navy; no inconsiderable share of praise was due to the Ministers who had directed their operations. ["Hear! hear!"] There was but one part of the conduct of those Ministers of which he disapproved, and that was, with respect to the Militia. It was the duty undoubtedly of every man, who received the pay of the country, to serve it wherever the Government might think his services necessary; but it was a system he could not but condemn, that those who nobly stood forward in defence of the country should be made mere recruiting parties to the army. He conceived, if we were to avail ourselves farther of the voluntary services of the Militia, those services should be tendered in corps, as was done with regard to Ireland. A different system was extremely unfair as to the officers. After officers of the Militia had, at considerable pains, disciplined their regiments, to take their men from them by the temptation of an high *douceur*, was acting with the utmost ingratitude towards them. He was persuaded it would be more satisfactory to enlist the Militia in bodies than by any other system: they would go with more readiness, and would require no bounty; consequently, on every account, it would be more advantageous that the Militia should enlist in bodies, not only with respect to the expence to the nation, but

also on account of the satisfaction it would give to the Militia officers.

The Address was then read by Mr. Speaker, and carried *nemine contradicente*.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS gave notice of his intention to move a vote of thanks to several public characters who had greatly distinguished themselves in the late successes this country had obtained, and particularly to the Earl of Mornington, Governor General in India. At the same time, as he was desirous that the House should be more fully informed of the grounds on which the war in India was undertaken, which had proved so successful and decisive, he would wish them to be satisfied that the war was in its nature just and defensive. He would therefore move first of all for papers to shew that we had been dragged into the war, and that it was, in every sense of the word, just and necessary. He then moved for copies and extracts of correspondence between the Governor General and Government in India with the Directors, respecting the war in India with the late Tippu Suldaun.—Ordered.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, September 25.

Their Lordships met about two o'clock, when they proceeded to St. James's to present the following Address to His Majesty on his most gracious speech from the Throne:

"Most gracious Sovereign,

"We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to return your Majesty our humble thanks for your Majesty's most gracious speech from the Throne.

"To assure your Majesty that, sensible of the happy effects of the measure adopted in the last Session, and of the courage, discipline, and steadiness, which have already been manifested, in the face of the enemy, by the forces which your Majesty was thereby enabled to employ; and impressed with a full persuasion of the beneficial consequences which may at the present moment be derived from an increase of your Majesty's forces abroad, we will without delay enter into the consideration of the propriety of enabling your Majesty to avail yourself, for that purpose, to a farther extent of the voluntary services of your Militia forces.

“ We beg leave humbly to congratulate your Majesty on those happy events, by which, under the blessing of Divine Providence, the situation and prospects of this country have, since the close of the last Session, been improved beyond the most sanguine expectations.

“ While the abilities and valour of the Commanders and Troops of the combined Imperial armies have continued to be displayed, and when the deliverance of Italy may be considered as secured by the result of a campaign equal in splendour and success to any the most brilliant recorded in history, we reflect, with just pride and satisfaction, that the valour of your Majesty's fleets and armies have been successfully and gloriously employed to the assistance of your Majesty's allies, to the support of the just cause in which your Majesty is engaged, and to the advancement of the most important interests of the British empire.

“ We have seen with particular pleasure the restoration of the kingdom of Naples to the dominion of its lawful Sovereign, and the renewal of your Majesty's former connections with that power.

“ The fresh calamity and disgrace which have attended the French expedition to Egypt, and the utter disappointment and confusion of its ultimate views against the British possessions in the East, are the more satisfactory to us, from a consideration of the means by which this result has been produced. We are sensible how materially the skill and heroism of a British officer, and of the small portion of naval force under his command, have contributed to direct and animate the valour of the Turkish forces in repelling the desperate attempt of the enemy against the heart of the Ottoman empire: and we feel and acknowledge with great satisfaction the justice of that praise which your Majesty has graciously been pleased to bestow on the vigilance, decision, and wisdom of the Governor General in Council, on this great and important occasion, and on the tried abilities and valour of the Commanders, Officers, and Troops, employed under his direction, which have placed the British interests in India in a state of solid and permanent security, by the total overthrow of that restless and perfidious power, who, instigated by the artifices, and deluded by the promises of the French, had combined with them for the execution of their ambitious and destructive projects in that quarter.

“ We trust that the effort which your Majesty is now making will produce the deliverance of the United Provinces; and although we lament with your Majesty the loss of the brave men who have fallen in the subsequent attack, yet the success of the British arms

in rescuing from the possession of the enemy the principal port and naval arsenal of the Dutch Republic, excites a well-founded confidence that the fleet, which, under the usurped dominion of France, was destined to co-operate in the invasion of these islands, may now, under its antient standard, partake in the glory of restoring the religion, liberty, and independence of those provinces, so long in intimate union and alliance with this country.

“ While we rejoice with your Majesty in the events which add so much lustre to the British character, we as cordially join in the sentiments justly due to your Majesty’s good and faithful ally the Emperor of Russia ; to whose magnanimity and wisdom, directing to so many quarters of Europe the force of his extensive and powerful empire, this country is in a great measure indebted for the success of its own efforts, as well as for the rapid and favourable change in the general situation of affairs.

“ We beg leave to return our thanks to your Majesty, for having been graciously pleased to direct copies to be laid before us of those engagements which have consolidated and cemented a connection so consonant to the permanent interests of the British empire, and so important at this moment to every part of the civilized world.

“ While we return thanks to your Majesty for your gracious compliance with our recommendation in communicating to the two Houses of Parliament in Ireland, at the close of their last session, the sentiments which we had humbly expressed to your Majesty respecting an incorporating Union with that kingdom, we concur with your Majesty in the persuasion that signal benefits will be derived to both countries from that important measure ; and we trust that the disposition of the Parliament there will be found to correspond with that which we have manifested for the accomplishment of a work which tends so much to add to the security and happiness of all your Majesty’s Irish subjects, and to consolidate the strength and prosperity of the empire.”

HIS MAJESTY’S Most Gracious ANSWER.

My Lords,

I receive with great pleasure this very dutiful and loyal Address.

The sentiments which you express are conformable to the whole tenor of your conduct ; and if the rapid improvement of our situation and prospects should lead, as I trust it will, to ultimate success in this just cause, I shall ever acknowledge, with pride and satisfaction, how much,

under the favour of Providence, this issue must be ascribed to the energy and wisdom manifested by my two Houses of Parliament throughout every period of this arduous contest.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, September 25.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE brought up the Report of the Committee appointed to prepare the address to His Majesty, which was read a first and second time, and the address ordered to be presented to His Majesty by such Members as were of his most honourable Privy Council ; and it was also ordered that such Members should wait upon His Majesty to know when he would be graciously pleased to receive the same.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved that His Majesty's most gracious speech might be taken into consideration to-morrow.

Mr. PLUMER said, that contemplating the magnitude and importance of the measure which was likely to be brought forward in the course of the week, he could not but have expected that the right honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or some other honourable gentleman near him, would have moved the call of the House. He could assure the House he had not the least objection to the bill intended to be brought in, for lessening and reducing the Militia to its antient and original standard ; but if, after that bill was passed into a law, it was the object of Ministers to send large bodies of troops drafted from the Militia to serve on the Continent, he could not but entertain the most serious doubt as to the propriety of such a measure ; yet, however his conclusions with respect to it might be founded in justice, still he thought it was a measure of such deep importance to the country, that it ought by no means to be carried into effect without a call of the House. His observations upon the subject were suggested entirely by his own feelings, and he really knew not whether any gentleman present would second the motion he meant to submit. He was aware how unpopular it was for any Member to move for a call of the House ; but he could not, consistent with the duty he owed to the country, avoid such a motion. He repeated, that he had no objection to the measure intended to be brought forward ; on the contrary, he was one who approved of the reduction of the Militia ; but he conceived, when such a measure was thought proper to be adopted by the Executive

Government, it was the duty of every man in Parliament to come forward in order to sanction it; and it was also the duty of Ministers to give every Member sufficient notice of their intention to propose such a measure. He could assure the right honourable gentleman, that in wishing for a call of the House, he was actuated by no wish unnecessarily to give trouble, to gentlemen who were in the country. For his own part, had he resided in the most distant part of the kingdom, and the Executive Government had thought it expedient to call the Parliament together at so early a period as the 24th of September, on a subject of less importance, he should have considered it his duty to have attended. He could not avoid observing, that a continental war was a species of contest by no means favourable to the wishes or inclinations of the people of this country; consequently, when it was in agitation to send large bodies of troops to Holland, he thought it would be highly to the credit, and ultimately to the satisfaction and comfort of Ministers, to have the House called; and if the measure proposed was a right and proper one, that it should have the sanction of as many of the country gentlemen as possible. From his own feelings upon a question of such magnitude, he was of opinion it ought to have the sanction of every representative of the people, whose attendance could be obtained. Under this impression, he should move that the House might be called over to-morrow fortnight. If it was objected by the right honourable gentleman (the Chancellor of the Exchequer), that the adoption of such a motion would create a delay injurious to the object intended to be promoted, he could only answer, that the subject was in itself of such vast importance, that it ought to be delayed till the sense of the whole legislative representation was taken as to its expediency. He concluded by moving, that the House should be called over to-morrow fortnight.

Mr. JONES rose to second the motion; he considered a call of the House as absolutely necessary; the reasons for it appeared to his mind so forcible, that he was persuaded no one could with propriety resist them. He was aware that some degree of odium attached to those who were the means of bringing gentlemen from their diversions, and management of their country affairs; but upon the present occasion it was indispensably necessary. He said he should not advert to the subject itself, which had been sufficiently alluded to by his honourable friend, but content himself with merely seconding the motion.

Mr. BUXTON observed, that however important the subject upon which the Parliament had been assembled thus early might be, yet it must be obvious that it was by no means novel in its nature.

The question now to be submitted to the House had been agitated, and amply discussed in the last session of Parliament. The benefits likely to result from it had then appeared so manifest, that although the question was then novel, and for the first time brought forward, it had not been thought necessary to move for a call of the House. If, therefore, when the question was new, a call of the House had not been thought necessary, he could see no just reason why it should be insisted upon now. Besides, he conceived a fuller attendance than was likely to be produced when the measure was brought forward wholly unnecessary. Indeed, it gave him great satisfaction yesterday to observe such a numerous attendance of Members in the House. It was a circumstance that convinced him, and must shew to the public, that their representatives were not inattentive to their interests. It was necessary to look to the situation of the country at this moment. Gentlemen were at their seats, attending to their affairs and domestic concerns. If any question arose that necessarily demanded their attendance, he was persuaded they would willingly attend; but he could see no necessity at present for a fuller attendance than there was likely to be. He observed, he would be as sorry to see a continental war as the honourable gentleman, or any other man in the country; but he could not consider this as a continental war. Wars formerly carried on by our ancestors on the Continent were for the purpose of assisting some continental ally in the recovery of continental territory; but the present war was one which was necessary to our existence. The safety of this country required the restitution of Holland to its antient Government. It was essential to the interests of this country that war should be carried on against Holland; consequently such a war, instead of being denominated a continental one, ought rather to be considered a war of defence. He trusted, therefore, the honourable gentleman would reflect upon his motion, and not divide the House.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he could not suppose the honourable gentleman meant to persist in his motion. He was surprised at a motion, calculated, as this was, to produce so much inconvenience to individuals, and retard the public business, which, from its nature, required dispatch, by a call of the House. Less argument in support of such a measure he had never heard. If the principle was once to be established, that whenever His Majesty exercised his royal prerogative, by calling the Parliament together within a shorter period than was usual, the urgency of the business for which he so convened it was to be an argument in support of a call of the House, the consequence would be, that those measures which His Majesty wished to have carried into effect at a fortnight's notice, would, by

such a mode of reasoning, be delayed another fortnight, and thus the effect intended to be produced by calling it together for the dispatch of business would be counteracted. The very act of exercising his prerogative, by calling the Parliament together at a time when it was obviously inconvenient for many of the Members to attend, was in itself that very species of summons which was likely to bring a fuller attendance than any call of the House, by implying, in a manner the most convincing, the importance of the measures to be discussed. Besides, in the present instance, the precise object of the motion seemed likely to be answered without the adoption of it. It was with the greatest satisfaction he had yesterday observed a much fuller attendance than at any time last year, when matters of the highest importance were under discussion, and when the present question was originally brought forward, and was new to the House. He not only had the satisfaction yesterday of witnessing a full attendance, but an attendance of nearly all those Members whom he had every reason to have believed nothing but the imperative call of the House could have brought back. For these reasons, therefore, he opposed the motion.

Mr. TIERNEY said he rose with the highest satisfaction in support of the motion. It had been his intention to have brought forward the precise motion himself; but, upon consideration, he had thought he should more effectually serve the cause by waiting to see whether some person of more experience than himself would not submit such a motion to the House. He was extremely glad to see the subject had been taken up by the most proper of all persons, an old, independent country gentleman. He was sensible one mischief of adopting such a measure had been urged against it. It was, that the object intended to be produced by calling together the Parliament in so short a period as fourteen days, might be done away by farther delay. At first this argument appeared to have some weight; but, upon examination, he believed it would prove fallacious. Though the call of the House would necessarily occupy the period of a fortnight, yet the bill might be going on through its several stages at the same time. He understood no opposition was intended to be made to the bill, yet he believed it would be impossible, adhering to the usual forms, to carry it through both Houses in less than a fortnight. He did not mean to say, if Ministers thought any particular measure required extraordinary dispatch, that a bill could not be carried into a law in a much shorter time; but he had no reason to suppose that any such haste was intended upon the present occasion. He said, he agreed with his friend as to the real object of the measure intended to be proposed; and, like him, his objec-

tion was not to the question, whether a disposable force should be drawn from the Militia and engrafted into the army? so much as to the probable application of that force. He lamented that any opinion had been given as to its future application. When an honourable gentleman had stated that the present question was not a novel one, he seemed to him to have lost sight of what the question really was. For his own part, he did not know that an expedition against Holland was altogether a bad thing for this country. Indeed there was a time when he would willingly have contributed all in his power to have forwarded such an expedition; but now, when we had obtained possession of the Dutch fleet, he thought we ought to be satisfied. Ministers were welcome to his thanks for so important a service; but since it had been accomplished, affairs in Holland had taken a new turn, and assumed a far different complexion. Having succeeded in crippling Holland, and rendering her assistance in any attack upon this country impracticable, we were still going on with an armed force against that country, without knowing what the object was we ultimately had in view. He confessed himself ignorant of, but he should be happy to be informed, what was the object of persisting in the attack against Holland. Almost the last words of the last session of Parliament stated, that the object of the war on the part of this country was the overthrow of the present Government in France. If that really was the object for which the war was continued, he could not see how any successes we might have in Holland would tend to forward it. He believed, if the Directory of France were to be asked in what manner they would wish England to wage war against them, they would answer, that England could not better serve them, than by wasting her strength in the dykes of Holland, and leaving France at liberty to resist her other enemies. The question, as it appeared to him, was whether, in the present state of public affairs, it was not expedient that the full sense of Parliament should be ascertained as to the measure proposed, and the most practicable means of carrying on the war against Holland with a view to our final success. The right honourable gentleman had observed there was a full attendance of Members yesterday. Certainly, compared with the Houses which distinguished, he had almost said which disgraced, the last session of Parliament, there was a full attendance yesterday. The attendance last session he conceived had not at all contributed to the credit of the House of Commons. To him, who knew the precise number of Members of which the House of Commons was composed, he could not consider an attendance like that of yesterday as a criterion of the sense of the House. The numbers, he believed, did not

amount to 200 ; most assuredly they were nothing like half the number of the people's representatives. If the right honourable gentleman meant to say, that the measure to be brought forward was one, the discussion of which required only a thin attendance, then he accounted for his opposition to the motion. He observed that one, or even two hundred Members formed a very small proportion of the House of Commons ; and the necessity of a call of the House was the more obvious, as those who did attend were mostly the Members who lived near town. He wished that upon a subject like the one about to be agitated, the Parliament should meet collectively. If there was a man so callous as to read the Gazette of last night, and then say, that the question of sending more men to Holland was not sufficiently important to require the full attendance of Parliament—of such a man he could only observe that he pitied his feelings. He thought he strictly discharged his duty as a Member of Parliament, by supporting the motion of his honourable friend. He could assure the House that his object was not to embarrass or impede any measure deemed necessary by Government,—on the contrary, his sole view was to give Ministers an opportunity of taking the sense of Parliament on some future motion, that might bring forward the consideration of the principles upon which a measure of so momentous and important a nature was founded. He heartily gave his assent to the motion of his honourable friend, and trusted it would be adopted by the House.

Mr. PLUMER referred to what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said respecting the attendance of gentlemen yesterday, who had not been in the habit of attending for some time. If the right honourable gentleman alluded to him, he begged leave to tell him, he was not one of that description. Whatever opinion he might have different from the right honourable gentleman, he should hold it his duty as long as he lived to attend in his place in Parliament ; he attended as a Member of Parliament to do his duty to his constituents, and the public at large, and not as a politician.

Mr. Chancellor PITT was surprised the honourable gentleman should express any doubt as to his meaning, or conceive that he meant him. It was most remarkable, that when he stated that many gentlemen had absented themselves, to whom his observations strictly did apply, that the honourable gentleman should suppose he intended to allude to him, to whom his observation did not apply.

Mr. PLUMER said, he supposed, as his habits and opinions generally led him to vote with those who had absented themselves,

he meant to apply his observation to him also ; “ the right honourable gentleman,” he added, “ has a way of *lumping* us all together, who do not vote with him.”

Mr. Chancellor PITT maintained, that he had not said any thing which tended to *lump* him with any other gentleman. However, if the honourable gentleman thought he deserved to be *lumped* with any other gentleman, and was determined to be *lumped*, he could not help it.

Mr. PLUMER said, he conceived the Chancellor of the Exchequer had applied his observation to him, because he sat on the opposite side of the House.

The House divided, when there appeared—Against the motion, 93 ; for the motion, 4. Majority, 89.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, September 26.

Lord GRENVILLE laid before the House Copies of the following Treaties entered into with the Emperor of Russia :

PROVISIONAL TREATY between HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY and His Majesty the EMPEROR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS. Dated at St. Petersburg, the $\frac{29th}{18th}$ of December 1798.

“ In the name of the Most Holy and indivisible Trinity,

“ His Majesty the King of Great Britain, and His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, in consequence of the alliance and friendship subsisting between them, being desirous to enter into a concert of measures, such as may contribute in the most efficacious manner to oppose the successes of the French arms and the extension of the principles of anarchy, and to bring about a solid peace, together with the re-establishment of the balance of Europe, have judged it worthy their most serious consideration and earnest solicitude to endeavour, if possible, to reduce France within its former limits as they subsisted before the Revolution. They have in consequence agreed to conclude a provisional treaty, and for this purpose they have named as their Plenipotentiaries, namely, His Majesty the King of Great Britain, Sir Charles Whitworth, K. B.

Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Im-

perial Court of Russia; and His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, the Chancellor Prince Besborodko, a Privy Councillor, Director General of the Posts, Senator, and Knight of the Orders of St. Andrew, of St. Alexander Newsky, of St. Anne, and Grand Cross of those of St. John of Jerusalem and of St. Vladimir, of the first class; the Sieur Kotschoubey, Vice Chancellor, Privy Councillor and Chamberlain, Knight of the Order of St. Alexander Newsky, and Grand Cross of that of St. Vladimir, of the second class; the Sieur Rostopschin, a Privy Councillor, Member of the College for Foreign Affairs, Knight of the Order of St. Alexander Newsky, and of that of St. Anne, of the first class; who, after having reciprocally communicated their full powers, have concluded and agreed upon the following articles:

ARTICLE I.

“ The two contracting powers, in the intention of inducing the King of Prussia to take an active part in the war against the common enemy, propose to employ all their endeavours to obtain that end. Immediately on His Prussian Majesty's consenting to this measure, His Imperial Majesty of all the Russias is ready to afford him a succour of land forces, and he destines for that purpose 45,000 men, infantry and cavalry, with the necessary artillery, upon the following conditions:

ARTICLE II.

“ This body of troops shall be put in motion as soon as the high contracting parties shall be assured of the determination of His Prussian Majesty being conformable to what has been before stated.

“ With regard to the farther movements of this corps, and its combined operations with the Prussian troops, His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias will arrange them with His Majesty the King of Prussia, and communication shall also be made of them to His Britannic Majesty, in order that by such a concert between the high allies, the military operations against the enemy may be made with the greater success, and that the object which is proposed may the more easily be attained.

ARTICLE III.

“ In order to facilitate to His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias the means to take such an active part in the present war against the French, His Britannic Majesty engages to furnish the pecuniary succours hereinafter specified; His Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, nevertheless reserving to himself the right to recall

the aforefaid body of troops into his own territories, if, by any unforefeen event, the whole of this pecuniary fuccour fhould not be furnifhed him.

ARTICLE IV.

“ The amount and the nature of thefe pecuniary fuccours have been fixed and regulated upon the following footing : 1. In order to enable His Imperial Majefty of all the Ruffias to expedite, as foon as poffible, and in the moft convenient manner, the troops deftined to be employed in favour of the good caufe, His Majefty the King of Great Britain engages, as foon as he fhall receive advice that the Ruffian troops, in confequence of the determination of His Majefty the King of Pruffia, are to march, in order to co-operate with thofe of his faid Majefty, to pay for the firft and the moft urgent expences, two hundred and twenty-five thoufand pounds fterling, dividing the payments in fuch manner, as that feventy-five thoufand pounds fterling fhould be paid as foon as thofe troops fhall have paffed the Ruffian frontiers; that the fecond payment, amounting to the fame fum, fhould be made on the expiration of the firft three months, and on the commencement of the fourth; and that the third payment, completing the fum total, fhould be made in like manner, after three months, and on the beginning of the feventh. 2. His Majefty the King of Great Britain engages alfo to furnifh to His Majefty the Emperor of all the Ruffias, a fubfidy of feventy-five thoufand pounds fterling per month, to be computed from the day on which the corps of troops above-mentioned fhall pafs the Ruffian frontiers. This fubfidy fhall be paid at the commencement of each month; and being deftined for the appointments and maintenance of the troops, it fhall be continued during the fpace of twelve months, unlefs peace fhould be made fooner. 3. The two high contracting parties, befides, fhall come to an underftanding, before the expiration of the term of a year above fpecified, whether, in cafe the war fhould not be terminated, the fubfidy above-mentioned fhall be continued.

ARTICLE V.

“ The two high contracting parties engage not to make either peace or armiftice without including each other, and without concerting with each other :—But if, through any unforefeen events, His Britannic Majefty fhould be under the neceffity of terminating the war, and thereby of difcontinuing the payment of the fubfidy, before the expiration of the twelve months above ftipulated, he engages, in that cafe, to pay three months advance of the fubfidy agreed upon of feventy-five thoufand pounds fterling, reckoning from the

day on which the information shall be received by the General commanding the Russian troops.

ARTICLE VI.

“ In like manner, if any aggression on Russia should take place, by which His Majesty the Emperor should be obliged to recall his army into his own dominions, the above-mentioned subsidy shall, in such case only, be paid up to the day on which the army shall re-enter the Russian frontiers.

ARTICLE VII.

“ His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias shall come to an understanding with his ally His Majesty the King of Prussia, respecting all the other expences which this corps of troops and its operations may require. His Britannic Majesty shall take no farther share in those expences than the sum of thirty-seven thousand five hundred pounds sterling per month, during all the time that the above-mentioned troops shall be employed, by virtue of this treaty, for the common cause. That sum shall be advanced by His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias; but His Britannic Majesty acknowledges it as a debt due by Great Britain to Russia, which he will discharge after the conclusion of a peace made by mutual agreement.

“ The mode and dates of the payment shall then be settled by mutual concert, according to the reciprocal convenience of the two allied Powers.

ARTICLE VIII.

“ The above-mentioned subsidies shall in this manner be considered as a sufficient succour for all expences, including those which may be necessary for the return of the Russian army.

ARTICLE IX.

“ This treaty shall be considered as provisional; and its execution, as it has been stated above, shall not take place until His Majesty the King of Prussia shall be determined to turn his forces against the common enemy; but in case he should not do so, the two high contracting parties reserve to themselves the right and the power to take, for the good of their affairs, and the success of the salutary end they have in view, other measures analogous to the times and circumstances, and to agree then upon those which in such a case they shall judge to be most necessary, adopting always as a basis (inasmuch as it shall be compatible) the stipulations of the present treaty. His Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, in order nevertheless to give a

still more striking proof of his sincere dispositions, and of his desire to be as much as possible useful to his allies, promises to put, during the course of the negotiation with His Prussian Majesty, and even previous to its termination, the above-mentioned corps of 45,000 men upon such a footing, that they may immediately be employed wherever, according to a previous concert amongst the allies, the utility of the common cause shall require.

ARTICLE X.

“ The present provisional treaty shall be ratified by His Britannic Majesty, and His Imperial Majesty of all the Russias ; and the ratifications shall be exchanged here in the space of two months, to be computed from the day of the signature, or sooner if it can be done.

“ In witness whereof, we, the undersigned, furnished with the full powers of His Majesty the King of Great Britain and the Emperor of all the Russias, have, in their names, signed the present treaty, and have affixed the seals of our arms thereto.

“ Done at St. Petersburg, the $\frac{29^{\text{th}}}{18^{\text{th}}}$ December, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight.

(L. S.) CHARLES WHITWORTH.

(L. S.) A^{te} P^{ce} de BEZBERODKO.

(L. S.) KOTSCHOUBEY.

(L. S.) ROSTOPSIN.”

DECLARATION.

“ By the provisional treaty concluded between His Majesty the King of Great Britain, and His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, the $\frac{29^{\text{th}}}{18^{\text{th}}}$ December, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight, it is stipulated, that the body of forty-five thousand men, furnished by his said Imperial Majesty for the support of the common cause, should be employed in co-operating with the troops of His Prussian Majesty, if that Sovereign should be induced to join his forces to those of their Majesties : But the endeavours which their Royal and Imperial Majesties have employed for this purpose having been unsuccessful, and that Prince persisting in his adherence to his system of neutrality ; the two high contracting parties, in order to neglect nothing on their part which may contribute to the success of the good cause, have resolved that the said body of forty-five thousand men, originally destined to second the hostile demon-

strations of Prussia against France, shall be equally employed against the common enemy, in whatever other quarter their Majesties may judge it to be most advantageous to their common operations.

“ For this purpose the Plenipotentiaries of their said Royal and Imperial Majesties have signed the present Declaration, which is to be considered as forming a part of the Provisional Treaty above-mentioned, concluded between the two Courts the $\frac{29^{\text{th}}}{18^{\text{th}}}$ of December one thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight.

“ Done at St. Petersburg this $\frac{29^{\text{th}}}{18^{\text{th}}}$ June, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine.

(L. S.) CHARLES WHITWORTH.

(L. S.) Le Comte de KOTSCHOUBEY.

(L. S.) Le Comte de ROSTOPSIN.”

*The CONVENTION between HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY and
His Majesty the EMPEROR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS. Signed at
St. Petersburg, the $\frac{22^{\text{d}}}{11^{\text{th}}}$ of June 1799.*

“ In the name of the Most Holy and Indivisible Trinity !

“ His Majesty the King of Great Britain, and His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, in consequence of the friendship, and the ties of intimate alliance, which exist between them, and of their common and sincere co-operation in the present war against the French, having constantly in their view to use every means in their power most effectually to distress the enemy, have judged, that the expulsion of the French from the Seven United Provinces, and the deliverance of the latter from the yoke under which they have so long groaned, were objects worthy of their particular consideration, and wishing at the same time to give effect, as far as possible, to a design of that importance ; their said Majesties have resolved to conclude with each other a convention, relative to this plan, and to the most proper means of carrying it into the most speedy execution. For this purpose they have named as their Plenipotentiaries, to wit, His Majesty the King of Great Britain, Sir Charles Whitworth, his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Imperial Court of Russia, Knight of the Order of the Bath ; and His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, the Count of Kotschoubey, his Vice Chancellor, actual Privy Councillor, actual Chamberlain,

Knight of the Order of St. Alexander Nevsky, Commander of that of St. John of Jerusalem, and Great Cross of the Order of St. Vladimir of the Second Class; and the Count of Rostopshin, his actual Privy Councillor, Member of the College of Foreign Affairs, Director-general of the Posts, Knight of the Order of St. Alexander Nevsky, and of St. Anne of the First Class, Great Chancellor and Great Cross of that of St. John of Jerusalem; who, after having reciprocally communicated to each other their full powers, have agreed upon the following Articles.

ARTICLE I.

“ His Majesty the King of Great Britain, thinking that the object above-announced cannot be better attained than by the aid of a body of Russian troops, His Imperial Majesty, notwithstanding the efforts which he has already made, and the difficulties of his employing an additional body of forces to act at a distance from his dominions, has nevertheless, in consequence of his constant solicitude in favour of the good cause, consented to furnish seventeen battalions of infantry, two companies of artillery, one company of pioneers, and one squadron of Hussars, making in all seventeen thousand five hundred and ninety-three men, to be destined for the said expedition to Holland. But as that number of troops, according to the plan proposed by His Britannic Majesty, is not sufficient, and as it has been judged that thirty thousand men would be necessary for that purpose, his said Majesty will, on his side, furnish thirteen thousand men of English troops, or at least eight thousand men, if that smaller number should be deemed sufficient, and amongst whom there shall be a proportion of cavalry sufficient for the services of such an army.

ARTICLE II.

“ This corps of troops of seventeen thousand five hundred and ninety-three men, together with the necessary artillery, shall assemble at Revel, in order that they may be from thence conveyed to their destination, either in English or other vessels freighted by His Britannic Majesty.

ARTICLE III.

“ In order to enable His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias to afford to the common cause this additional and efficacious succour, His Majesty the King of Great Britain engages to furnish the undermentioned subsidies, upon the condition that His Imperial Majesty of all the Russias shall have a right to recall into his dominions the above-mentioned corps of troops, if, through any un-

foreseen event, such subsidies should not be regularly furnished to him.

ARTICLE IV.

“ The amount and the nature of those pecuniary succours have been settled and regulated in the following manner ; 1st. In order to enable His Imperial Majesty to assemble and expedite this corps as soon and as well equipped as possible, His Majesty the King of Great Britain engages, as soon as he shall receive advice that the above-mentioned troops have reached the place of their rendezvous, that is to say, at Revel, and that it shall be declared that they are ready to embark (whether the transports be arrived or not), to pay for the first and most urgent expences the sum of eighty-eight thousand pounds sterling, dividing the payments into two parts, to wit, that forty-four thousand pounds sterling be paid immediately after it shall have been declared, either by the Commander in Chief of that corps to the English Commissary, or by the Ministry of His Imperial Majesty to the Minister of His Britannic Majesty resident at St. Petersburg, that the said corps is ready ; and that the second payment, completing the sum total of eighty-eight thousand pounds sterling, shall take place three months afterwards and at the commencement of the fourth. 2d. His Majesty the King of Great Britain engages, in like manner, to furnish to His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias a subsidy of forty-four thousand pounds sterling per month, to be computed from the day on which the above-mentioned corps of troops shall be ready. This subsidy shall be paid at the commencement of each month, and destined for the appointments and the entertainment of the troops. It shall be continued until they shall return into Russian ports, in English or other vessels, freighted by His Britannic Majesty.

ARTICLE V.

“ If this corps of Russian troops should meet with difficulties in procuring, during the expedition to which it is destined, or in case of its wintering, as shall be hereafter mentioned, in England, or during the voyages it shall have to make, its necessary subsistence, by means of the measures which the Russian Commanders or Commissaries may take for that purpose, His Britannic Majesty, upon the requisition of the Minister of His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, residing at his Court, shall furnish whatever may be necessary to the Russian troops, and an exact account shall be kept of all the provisions and other articles so delivered, in order that their value may be afterwards deducted from the subsidy, such provisions

and other articles being valued at the price paid for them by His Majesty, for his own troops.

ARTICLE VI.

“ As the transport of the horses necessary for the officers, the artillery, and the baggage, would require a great many vessels, and as that arrangement would lead to many other inconveniences, and more particularly to that of a delay prejudicial to the above-mentioned expedition, His Britannic Majesty engages to furnish, at his own expence, the necessary number of horses, according to the statement which shall be delivered, and to have them conveyed to the place where the Russian troops are to act ; his said Majesty will, in like manner, maintain them at his own expence during the whole time that those troops shall be employed, and until they shall be re-embarked, in order to return to the ports of Russia. His Britannic Majesty will then dispose of them in such manner as he shall judge proper.

ARTICLE VII.

“ In case that the Russian troops, after having terminated in Holland the projected expedition, or in consequence of its being deferred through any unforeseen circumstances, should not be able to return into the ports of His Imperial Majesty during the favourable season, His Majesty the King of Great Britain engages to receive them into his dominions, to provide them there with good quarters, and all other advantages, until the troops shall be able to return on the opening of the navigation, or shall be employed upon some other destination, which shall be previously settled between their Royal and Imperial Majesties.

ARTICLE VIII.

“ As the principal object of the employment of this corps of troops is a sudden attack to be made on Holland, by means of which His Britannic Majesty hopes to produce there a favourable change ; as besides, no fixed term for the continuance of the subsidies is stipulated, whilst on the other hand the said troops, after their return to Russia, must be re-conducted to their ordinary quarters, mostly at a great distance, and as the marches which they will have to make will require considerable expences, His Majesty the King of Great Britain hereby engages to make good this charge by a payment of subsidies for two months, to be computed from the day of the arrival of those troops in Russian ports. In like manner His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, without fixing any term, reserves to himself the right of causing the said corps of troops to re-

turn into his dominions, in the spring of the next year 1800; or if any hostile aggression upon Russia, or any other important event should render it necessary: in these two cases the above-mentioned engagement of his Britannic Majesty concerning the payment of two months subsidy shall equally take place.

ARTICLE IX.

“As it is understood that the expedition to Holland, which has given rise to the present Convention, is to be effected in common by Russian and English troops, each party shall follow, relative to the employment and to the command of the troops, literally the treaty of defensive alliance concluded between the two high contracting parties the $\frac{7^{\text{th}}}{18^{\text{th}}}$ of February, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five. In like manner, if any difficulties should arise, either between the Commanders of the respective forces or otherwise, which may regard the above-mentioned troops of His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, the solution of such difficulties shall be looked for in the stipulations of the said treaty of the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five, or likewise in that concluded with the Court of Vienna the $\frac{2^{\text{d}}}{14^{\text{th}}}$ of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two.

ARTICLE X.

“The present Convention shall be ratified by His Majesty the King of Great Britain, and by His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias; and the ratifications shall be exchanged here in the space of two months, to be computed from the day of its signature, or sooner if it can be done.

“In witness whereof we, the undersigned, furnished with full powers by His Majesty the King of Great Britain, and by His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, have, in their names, signed the present Convention, and have affixed thereto the seal of our arms.

“Done at St. Petersburg, the $\frac{2^{\text{d}}}{11^{\text{th}}}$ of June, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine.

(L. S.) CHARLES WHITWORTH.

(L. S.) Le Comte de KOTSCHOUBEY.

(L. S.) Le Comte de ROSTOPSIN.”

SEPARATE ARTICLE.

I.

"Although it be stated in the Article II. of the Convention concluded this day, that the corps of Russian troops, forming seventeen thousand five hundred and ninety-three men, destined for the expedition to Holland, shall be conveyed to its destination in English or other vessels freighted by His Majesty the King of Great Britain; nevertheless, in order so much the more to facilitate this important enterprise, His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias consents to furnish six ships, five frigates, and two transport vessels, which, being armed en flutes, will receive on board as many troops as they shall be able to contain, whilst the remainder of the said corps shall be embarked on board of English or other transport vessels, freighted by His Britannic Majesty.

II.

"His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias will lend these ships and frigates upon the following conditions: 1st, There shall be paid by England, upon their quitting the port of Cronstadt, in order to go to the place of rendezvous, which is Revel, the sum of fifty-eight thousand nine hundred and twenty-seven pounds sterling, and ten shillings, as a subsidy for the expences of equipment, &c. for three months, to be computed from the day, as it is above stated, of their departure from Cronstadt. 2dly, After the expiration of these months, His Britannic Majesty shall continue the same subsidies, that is to say, of nineteen thousand six hundred and forty-two and a half pounds sterling a month, which shall be paid at the commencement of each month. 3dly, Independently of this pecuniary succour, His Britannic Majesty shall provide for the subsistence of the crews; and the officers and sailors shall be treated on the same footing as are the English officers and sailors in time of war, and as are the Russian officers and sailors, who are at present in the squadron of His Imperial Majesty, which is united to the English squadron. 4thly, All these stipulations shall have full and entire effect until the return of the above-mentioned ships and frigates into Russian ports.

III.

"If it should happen, contrary to all expectation, that those six ships, five frigates, and two transport vessels, should not be able, through some unforeseen event, to return to Russia before the close of the present campaign, His Britannic Majesty engages to admit

them into the ports of England, where they shall receive every possible assistance, both for necessary repairs, and for the accommodation of the crews and officers.

IV.

“ As the six ships, five frigates, and two transports, above-mentioned, having been originally intended for another destination, were furnished with provisions for three months, His Britannic Majesty, instead of furnishing them in kind, as it is stated in the second article, engages to pay, according to an estimate which shall be made, the value of those provisions. With regard to the officers, His Majesty the King of Great Britain will adapt the same principle as has been followed until the present time, respecting the officers of the Russian squadron which is joined to the naval forces of England. That shall serve as a rule for indemnifying them for the preparations which they may have made for the campaign, such as it had been originally intended to take place.

“ This separate article shall be considered as forming part of the Convention above-mentioned, as being inserted therein word for word ; and it shall be ratified, and the ratifications exchanged in the same manner.

“ In witness whereof we, the undersigned, furnished with the full powers of His Majesty the King of Great Britain, and of His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, have, in their name, signed the present separate article, and have affixed thereto the seal of our arms.

“ Done at St. Petersburg, this $\frac{22^d}{11^{th}}$ of June, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine.

(L. S.) CHARLES WHITWORTH.

(L. S.) Le Comte de KOTSCHOUBEY.

(L. S.) Le Comte de ROSTOPSIN.”

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, September 26.

The House waited upon His Majesty with the following Address:—

“ Most gracious Sovereign,

“ We, your Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Great Britain, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to return your Majesty the thanks of this House for your most gracious speech from the Throne; and to assure your Majesty, that we shall proceed, without delay, to consider of the propriety of enabling your Majesty to avail yourself, to a farther extent, of the voluntary services of the Militia, at a moment when we are satisfied an increase of our active force abroad may be productive of the most important and beneficial consequences.

“ We have seen the happy effects of the measure adopted on this subject in the last Session; and we reflect with pride that the forces which your Majesty was thereby enabled to employ have already displayed, in the face of the enemy, a courage, discipline, and steadiness, worthy of the character of British soldiers.

“ It is with the utmost satisfaction we have observed the rapid improvement of our situation and prospects, which, under the blessing of Providence, has taken place in the short interval since the last Session; and we cordially congratulate your Majesty on the continued display of the abilities and valour of the Commanders and Troops of the combined Imperial Armies, and on the deliverance of Italy by the result of a campaign equal in splendour and success to any the most brilliant recorded in history; and we warmly participate with your Majesty in the satisfaction which must be excited in every British heart by seeing your fleets and armies successfully employed to the assistance of your allies, to the support of our just cause, and to the advancement of the most important interests of the British empire.

“ Among the happy effects of those exertions, we rejoice to observe the restoration of the kingdom of Naples to the dominion of its lawful Sovereign, and the renewal of your Majesty’s former connections with that power.

“ We have witnessed, with joy and exultation, the glorious exploits which have rendered the French expedition to Egypt productive of fresh calamity and disgrace to our enemies, and which have frustrated their ultimate views against our Eastern possessions; and

we cannot forbear to express our just sense of the courage of the Turkish forces, and our warmest admiration of the skill and heroism of a British officer, by whose efforts, with a small portion of your Majesty's naval force under his command, the desperate attempt of the enemy was defeated. While we rejoice in the additional security which the British interests in India have derived from the overthrow of that restless and perfidious power, who, instigated by the artifices, and deluded by the promises, of the French, had entered into their ambitious and destructive projects; we join with your Majesty in affording the highest praise to the vigilance, decision, and wisdom, of the Governor General in Council, and to the tried abilities and valour of the Commanders, Officers, and Troops, employed under his direction on this great and important occasion.

"We trust that there is every reason to expect that the effort which your Majesty is making for the deliverance of the United Provinces will prove successful, and will, notwithstanding the resistance which the enemy has been enabled to oppose, speedily surmount every obstacle; and we have already abundant reason to rejoice in the first success of the British arms, which has rescued from the possession of the enemy the principal port and naval arsenal of the Dutch Republic, and has opened the pleasing prospect that the fleet which, under the usurped dominion of France, was destined to co-operate in the invasion of these islands, may shortly, under its antient standard, partake of the glory of restoring the religion, liberty, and independence, of those provinces, so long in intimate union and alliance with this country.

"Rejoicing with your Majesty in events which add so much lustre to the British character, we cordially join in the sentiments so justly due to the conduct of your Majesty's good and faithful ally the Emperor of Russia, to whose magnanimity and wisdom, directing to so many quarters of Europe the force of his extensive and powerful empire, we are in a great degree indebted for the success of our own efforts, as well as for the rapid and favourable change in the general situation of affairs. We acknowledge your Majesty's goodness in having directed copies to be laid before us of those engagements, which have consolidated and cemented a connection so consonant to the permanent interests of your Majesty's empire, and so important at the present moment to every part of the civilized world.

"It gives us pleasure to learn that the ample supplies, which were granted to your Majesty in the course of the last Session, will so nearly provide for the exigencies of the public service, even on the extensive scale which our present operations require, as to enable

your Majesty without farther aid to continue those exertions to the close of the present year; and we will, without delay, consider of providing for the expence which will be necessary for the early part of the year, the proper estimates for which your Majesty has ordered to be laid before us.

“ We beg to return your Majesty our sincere thanks for having, in pursuance of our recommendation, judged it proper to communicate to your two Houses of Parliament in Ireland, at the close of their last Session, the sentiments which we had expressed to your Majesty respecting an incorporating Union with that kingdom; we continue to be satisfied that signal benefit would be derived to both countries from that important measure; and we trust that the disposition of your Parliament there will be found to correspond with that which we have manifested for the accomplishment of a work which would tend so much to add to the security and happiness of all your Majesty’s Irish subjects, and to consolidate the strength and prosperity of the empire.”

To which His Majesty was pleased to give this most gracious Answer :

Gentlemen,

I return you my particular thanks for this dutiful Address.

I receive with the highest satisfaction your congratulations on the happy improvement of our affairs, which I shall ever principally ascribe, under the blessing of Providence, to the wisdom, perseverance, and spirit of my Parliament, guiding and animating the efforts of a brave and loyal people, in support of their dearest interests.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that on the first day of the Session he had the honour of giving notice of his intention of moving the thanks of the House to several Commanders of His Majesty’s forces by sea and land, and to the officers and men under their command. He had at the same time announced his intention of moving for the thanks of the House to the Governor General of India; but as it was his wish in the latter case that the House should not proceed to vote their thanks until they were in full possession of the various circumstances which had recently occurred in India, he had moved for the production of various papers, containing every information upon that subject; these papers were not yet laid upon the table, and therefore he should not trouble the House upon that part of the subject this day, but should confine himself to moving for thanks to the Generals, Admiral, and Officers employed in the land and sea service on the coast of Holland, and also to another most brave and gallant Officer, whose

services were alluded to in His Majesty's Speech from the Throne—he meant Captain Sir William Sidney Smith. With respect to the expedition to the coast of Holland, the House might not perhaps, at the first view, be apprized of the extent of the services which were performed by the gallant Admiral to whom the conduct of that expedition was entrusted. A great part of the merit of that Officer was not known to the world; it could only be known to those who had an opportunity of inspecting the whole of the operation. The armament of which Admiral Mitchell had the command, sailed from Deal under the most favourable circumstances, and with a fair wind. On the third day, however, after they had sailed, they encountered a storm, uncommonly violent for this season of the year, which exposed them to the greatest difficulties and dangers. The numerous fleet which was under the care of Admiral Mitchell consisted of two hundred transports of various sorts and sizes, unaccustomed to this kind of service, and subject to no military discipline; and during a period of ten or twelve days of almost continued storm, he, by his unwearied exertions, professional skill, and perseverance, kept them together without loss, and brought them to the point of their destination. He had mentioned these circumstances for the reason he had before given, viz. because, perhaps, the public were not fully aware of the facts he was now stating. With respect to the land forces employed upon this expedition, it was hardly necessary for him to state to the House, that they had encountered great fatigues and dangers, which they had sustained with the most persevering resolution. Previous to the expedition taking place, the general object of it was known throughout the country; it was, he believed, no secret, that an attempt was to be made for the deliverance of Holland; but at the same time its particular destination was not known. He believed, that when they sailed from this country very few people were apprized of the spot where the attack was to be made. The circumstances which preceded and attended the disembarkation of the troops on the coast of Holland, were such as added much to the merit of the land forces employed, because they were of a nature that added much to the difficulty of the service. If they had made an attack upon a place unsuspected by the enemy, and where they could not therefore have been prepared for resistance, the service would not have been so arduous; but they were kept, by the unfavourable state of the weather, for nearly ten days opposite to the place where the attack was intended to be made, by which means the enemy were put upon their guard, and had time to prepare a defence. Instead therefore of effecting a landing upon a spot where

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the enemy could oppose no resistance, or only a very slight one, they had to encounter the accumulated force which the enemy had by this unfortunate accident the means to collect. The landing was, however, effected, notwithstanding these obstacles, upon a most dangerous coast. The troops, many of whom had never been engaged before, but animated by their native courage, and anxious for the honour of their country, conducted themselves with a degree of bravery and steadiness not often equalled by the veteran troops of any country but their own. It could not, he was sure, be necessary for him to take up the time of the House, by commenting upon the importance of the object in which they were engaged, because it must be obvious to the commonest understanding. They had rescued a very large fleet from the power of an implacable enemy; a fleet which had hitherto been in hostile array against us, and which had rendered it necessary, that a very large part of His Majesty's naval force should be employed against them. The great advantages, therefore, resulting to this country from having rescued that fleet from the power of the French were too great to be questioned for a moment. Every man, who was interested in the happiness of his country, must observe with pleasure the change of circumstances which this event has produced. Instead of having a powerful and hostile fleet opposite to our shores, that fleet is now delivered from the dominion of an enemy, the old and inveterate rival of this country, and is now united with us in the closest alliance: they are now united with us under a standard which, for more than a century past, has been united to us by inclination and interest. He would not trouble the House farther upon this subject, but he could not avoid expressing his most sanguine hope, that the motions he should have the honour to make would meet with unanimous concurrence.

On the motion of Mr. Secretary Dundas, the following Resolutions were unanimously agreed to, viz.

“Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“That the thanks of this House be given to Lieutenant General Sir Ralph Abercromby, Knight of the most honourable Order of the Bath, for the distinguished gallantry and ability with which he effected his landing on the Dutch coast, and established his position in the face of a powerful enemy, and, by securing the command of the principal fort and naval arsenal of the Dutch Republic, afforded to His Majesty's fleet the means of rescuing from the power of the French the naval force in the Texel.

“Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“That the thanks of this House be given to Lieutenant General

Sir James Pulteney, Baronet, Major Generals Francis D'Oyley, Eyre Coote, Harry Burrard, and John Moore, and to the several Officers of the Army under the command of Lieutenant General Sir Ralph Abercromby, for their late gallant conduct, and meritorious exertions, in effecting a landing on the Dutch coast, and establishing a position in the face of a powerful enemy, thereby securing the command of the principal fort and naval arsenal of the Dutch Republic, and affording to His Majesty's fleet the means of rescuing from the power of the French the naval force in the Texel.

Resolved, nemine contradicente,

"That this House doth highly approve of, and acknowledge, the services of the Non-commissioned Officers and Private Soldiers of the Army serving under the command of Lieutenant General Sir Ralph Abercromby, at the attack of the Helder, on the coast of Holland; and that the same be signified to them by the Commanders of the several Corps, who are desired to thank them for their gallant behaviour."

Ordered,

That Mr. Speaker do communicate the said Resolutions to his Royal Highness Field-marshal the Duke of York, Captain General of His Majesty's Forces, and Commander in Chief of the Allied Army in Holland, and that his Royal Highness be requested by Mr. Speaker to signify the same to the General and other Officers referred to therein.

Resolved, nemine contradicente,

"That the thanks of this House be given to Vice Admiral Andrew Mitchell, for the distinguished skill and perseverance with which, in spite of great and unforeseen difficulties, he kept collected, and conducted to the coast of Holland, the numerous fleet under his command; for the zeal and readiness with which he co-operated with the land forces in their descent upon the coast of Holland; and for the promptitude and ability by which he rescued the naval force of the Dutch Republic from the power of the French.

Resolved, nemine contradicente,

"That the thanks of this House be given to the several Captains and Officers in the Fleet under the command of Vice Admiral Mitchell, for their able support of, and co-operation with, the Land Forces, and for their meritorious and successful exertions in rescuing from the power of the French the naval force in the Texel.

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“ Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“ That this House doth highly approve of, and acknowledge, the service of the Seamen and Marines on board the ships under the command of Vice Admiral Mitchell, in the assistance they afforded to the Land Forces in their descent upon the coast of Holland, and for the steadiness and zeal they manifested in pursuit of the Dutch fleet within the Zuyder Sea; and that the Officers commanding the several ships do signify the same to their respective crews, and do thank them for their good behaviour.”

Ordered,

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That Mr. Speaker do communicate the said Resolutions to Admiral Lord Viscount Duncan, and that his Lordship be requested by Mr. Speaker to signify the same to the Vice Admiral, Captains, and other Officers, referred to therein.

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Mr. Secretary Dundas said, he had now to move the thanks of the House for services performed in a different quarter, by that gallant officer to whom he had before alluded, Sir Sidney Smith. In speaking upon this subject, he really felt himself at a loss for terms to express his sentiments upon the conduct of that officer. It was impossible for a human individual to conceive a situation of more difficulty and delicacy than that in which Sir S. Smith was placed. It was not easy to conceive greater difficulties, and less means—and yet, in this situation, to bring off a very small remnant of force, not by a well-conducted retreat, but with glory, against the whole power of the French at St. John D’Acre. It was now about twelve months since the intelligence arrived of the landing of that army on the coast of Egypt, and what the general feeling in this country was upon that occasion must now be fresh in every man’s mind. After many difficulties, the force of the enemy was collected for the purpose of making an attack upon St. John D’Acre, garrisoned by a small number of Turks, and assisted by a handful of British troops. Nothing could exceed the importance of this contest: they had, as Sir Sidney had stated, a nation for spectators, who waited the issue of the conflict, in order to determine which party they should join. He did not, in his opinion, say too much when he said, that he believed that the safety of the Turkish empire depended upon the event of that contest. He animated the Turkish forces by his conduct, and directed them with his skill. He fought at the head of a few British seamen, for more than sixty days in succession, in defending a breach against the whole French force, headed by an enterprising General. He freely confessed, that he never got over the astonishment that he felt when he was first informed of these circumstances; he had read the dispatches again

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and again; he had frequently ruminated upon them; and to this moment he could scarcely conceive how human exertion could achieve what he had done. This gallant officer had in the course of his life met with many difficulties, and there was a time when some persons who did not know him talked lightly of him. To those who could talk or think so of such an officer as Sir Sidney Smith, he would say nothing; he would leave them to the contempt they deserved, and to the remorse they must now feel in contemplating the character of that officer. He would not say that his actions on the coast of Egypt were unrivalled, but he would say, that there never were any in which there were displayed more heroism, more skill, and greater exertion. This was the character of Sir Sidney Smith, and one that he richly deserved; and he felt great pleasure in taking this opportunity of thus expressing his sentiments of, and paying this tribute of applause to, that meritorious officer.

Mr. Secretary Dundas then moved the following Resolutions, which were unanimously agreed to, viz.

“ Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to Captain Sir William Sidney Smith, for the conspicuous skill and heroism by which he animated and directed the efforts of the Turkish forces, and of the small number of British officers and seamen under his command, in their long and successful defence of Saint John D’Acre, on the coast of Syria, against the formidable and desperate attack of the French army under the command of General Buonaparte.

“ Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to the officers belonging to the ships under the command of Captain Sir William Sidney Smith, for the great bravery, and unremitting exertions, which they manifested, both on shore and on board the ships, in the successful defence of Saint John D’Acre, on the coast of Syria, against the formidable and desperate attack of the French army under the command of General Buonaparte; and that Sir William Sidney Smith do signify the same to them.

“ Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“ That this House doth highly approve of, and acknowledge, the services of the seamen and marines belonging to the ships under the command of Captain Sir William Sidney Smith, in the glorious defence of Saint John D’Acre, against the formidable and desperate attack of the French army under the command of General Buonaparte; and that Sir William Sidney Smith do signify the same to

the crews of the respective ships, and do thank them for their good behaviour."

Ordered,

That Mr. Speaker do signify the said Resolutions to Captain Sir William Sidney Smith.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS then rose for the purpose, he said, of moving for leave to introduce a bill to enable His Majesty to receive an additional aid for the prosecution of the war, by availing himself of the voluntary services of the Militia. From what had already transpired, it must have been obvious that every endeavour had been made to render the nature and object of the bill as generally known as possible. As to its principle, it was by no means novel, for in the course of the last Session of Parliament he had had occasion to state it much more at length than he should feel any necessity for doing upon the present occasion. That principle, as he had then explained it, had, in the opinion of the House, justified a measure, the tendency of which was not to lessen the force of the country, but to employ the greater part of it, not only for home defence, but for effectual operations abroad. He wished to obviate the observations that had been urged, that the Government of this country had been too rash and hardy in adopting a measure which it was supposed would have the effect of lessening the military force of the kingdom; he was yet to learn how it could be lessening the force of the country, to employ the greater part of it beyond the circle of the island; he considered that by so doing he was more effectually securing the safety of the island, than by suffering that force to remain inactive at home; he was yet to learn how employing our forces against an enemy's country, instead of confining them to our own, was lessening our internal security. When he introduced the former bill last Session of Parliament, he certainly was at no pains to conceal from the House that the object of the Government was to employ the Militia who might offer their services against Holland. So far from concealing, or wishing to conceal, that fact, he had distinctly stated that the particular interest of this country, and its old established connections with Holland, rendered it expedient, if Holland was to be delivered from that bondage under which it had laboured, and restored to its antient Government, that it should be accomplished by the co-operation of the forces of this country, and not by our allies alone. He confessed, he did not at that time pretend to point out the particular places against which the efforts of our forces should be directed; but he had no hesitation in saying, that in case the object of the allied Powers should be the deliverance of Holland, that it would be for the interest of this

country to entrust, to the enterprise and good conduct of a British force, some expedition between the Texel and the Mediterranean. The object of the present bill, though it appeared to be that of decreasing the Militia, as far as related to the internal defence of the country, was, in point of fact, to increase a force which might be effectually employed by his Majesty, in any part where their services might be necessary in facilitating the cause in which we were engaged. He was so far from being desirous of diminishing any part of the forces of the kingdom, that his sole object was to enable them to act in such a manner as the wisdom of His Majesty's councils might suggest. He knew well there was no individual in the House, or in the country, who would wish to lessen that regard which was universally felt for the Militia. It was a force which had been long established, and its utility had been long recognized by the wisdom of Parliament. He of all others might be supposed less inclined to diminish the respect due to it; and he could assure the House no such intention was manifested by the present bill. He meant to leave the Militia-force of the country equal in point of extent to what it was originally recognized by the British Parliament, and equal to what the first promoters of that measure had deemed adequate to the security of the kingdom. That there had existed a period in the course of the present war, when it was necessary to increase that force for the internal defence of the kingdom, he admitted. It had been thought necessary to raise that force known by the denomination of the Supplementary Militia; but then it was to be recollected, that that measure had been brought forward at a time when the forces of this country, calculated for offensive or defensive operations, were exceedingly small, compared with what they were now; that it was at a period too when the country was threatened with invasion by its old and inveterate enemies. Such, certainly, was the state of the country at a particular period, that it was thought indispensably necessary to increase the Militia, and parliamentary measures had been accordingly taken: but for some time past the necessity of so large a defensive force had been gradually wearing away, particularly by the successes of His Majesty's arms by sea and land, and still more so by those meritorious exertions which the zeal and loyalty of the people of this country had produced in defence of their King, their Constitution, their Laws and Religion. The force raised by that zeal and loyalty, which had so happily pervaded all ranks of the people, could only be supposed to have for its more immediate object the protection and defence of the capital of the British empire. Under these circumstances, therefore, adverting to the present situation and internal

safety of the country on the one hand, and to the unexampled successes already obtained by His Majesty's arms, and those which the zeal of his people in arms gave an assurance of on the other, he should, without entering into any farther details, state his motion, which was "for liberty to bring in a bill to sanction the reduction of the Militia, for the purpose of employing a part of it on more extensive services." In so doing, he repeated, that he was far from being actuated by any intention to decrease, or weaken, that force which had been considered by our ancestors as constituting one of the greatest bulwarks of our national glory. He concluded by moving for leave to bring in a bill for the reduction of the Militia forces of this kingdom; and to enable His Majesty to accept the services of an additional number of volunteers, under certain restrictions.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he did not rise with any disposition to oppose the motion for leave to bring in the bill. If even the measure had had for its object the engrafting the whole of the Militia into the regular forces of the country, he did not know that under certain restrictions he should have opposed it. Though no man respected the Militia as the pure constitutional mode of defence more than he did, yet when he reflected upon the manner in which that Militia had been employed within the last two or three years past, if he was not led to respect it less than he had done, he could certainly not avoid thinking it had been materially perverted from its original institution. He particularly alluded to what had taken place about two years ago, when the Government had invited the Militia to volunteer their services in Ireland. He did not wish to discuss the propriety of that measure, or to withhold from Ministers the tribute of thanks to which they were justly entitled for rescuing Ireland from the rebellion which had threatened it; but what he meant to assert was, that the moment a service of that description was performed by a force expressly constituted for home defence, the very nature and essence of that force was altered. By recognizing the principle, that the Militia might be constitutionally employed by Government out of the kingdom, the House was in fact establishing a force within the country, which might in time become a standing army for the encroachments of the Crown, instead of a standing army for the defence of the people. He believed, from all that he had heard stated upon the subject, by those who understood it much better than he did, that the result of such a system would be, that in the event of a peace, those gentlemen of high rank and spirit, who had usually come forward as officers of the Militia, would not be found willing again to offer their services; and for this reason, that gentlemen of the description he alluded to, when they presented

themselves in that character, had no military object in view, beyond that of affording ~~interior~~ protection to the country; no inducement to offer their ~~services~~ ^{seignior} of the kingdom, but what arose from their patriotism and anxiety for its prosperity; and not equivalent to repay them for the inconveniences ~~from~~ which they subjected themselves. He did not mean to say anything that in the least degree favoured of disrespect, as to the ~~credit~~ ^{credit} of the services of the Militia. His observations were solely confined to what he considered an unconstitutional practice, namely, sending the Militia to Ireland, or to any other place out of the kingdom; yet viewing the Militia as a force which Ministers were to have the right of employing upon services so distinct from what it was originally constituted for, he could not but consider it as rather entitled to be regarded with jealousy than with respect. As to the measure now proposed, he would be the last to throw any embarrassment in the way of it; he would not oppose the principle on which it was founded, because he could not say it was a bad one; but his difficulty arose in consequence of those who had proposed it having professed their object in bringing it forward. He was extremely sorry that Government had avowed their intentions to apply the force now to be raised, in the same manner as they had applied that which had been raised. If Ministers would say that they had it not in contemplation to send the force to be raised by the reduction of the Militia, either to Holland, France, or the Netherlands, but that they merely wished to have an additional disposable force, in such case he should applaud and warmly support the measure; but he could not be sensible of the application that was intended to be made of the force so raised, and at the same time approve of it. Had the Executive Government avoided stating what was the object to which such force was to be applied, he could not but have concurred in voting a disposable one, if it had been deemed necessary; but after he had heard His Majesty's speech, and the address in answer to it, he could not, consistent with his duty, sanction the measure recommended by the one, and acceded to by the other. He did not comprehend how he could conceal, either from himself or his constituents, his knowledge of the object of Government in raising this additional force. He entreated the House to consider whether the present was not a time when it was necessary to think seriously on the consequences of wasting English blood in a continental war, more particularly when it had been formally announced by Ministers, that the old mode of recruiting the army was at an end. He trusted they would pause, before they suffered a single man to leave the country, for the purposes of ambition; he believed he was correct in using that word, as it was justified by the

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expression of Ministers themselves. Was it too much for the House to pause, before they sent more men abroad, when it had been avowed, that not only by the old mode of recruiting the army men could no longer be got; but when it had also been as distinctly avowed, that the old funding system by which our army had used to be paid was also done away, and a new system of finance obliged to be adopted? He did not address the House in this manner to create any sentiment of despair, but only that they should consider the disastrous consequences of continental expeditions before they gave them their farther sanction. We ought to be grateful to Providence for the advantages obtained, without risking the loss of them. True, a right honourable gentleman had said, he had scarce recovered his surprise at the splendid achievements which he was recording. Such a succession of glorious victories he even thought too great to be achieved; but did he not recollect that there was such a thing as good fortune; and that although fortune had at one period been favourable, it might not be so at another? Was it then too much to ask the House to consider before they consented to withdraw from the country its constitutional defence? Gentlemen talked of this country being safe by rescuing Holland from the dominion of the French. He had himself stated yesterday, that landing 10,000 men at the Helder, and taking the Dutch fleet, was a measure well planned, and as ably executed; but what was the situation of Holland now? She had no fleet by which she could act hostilely towards this country, or injure us in our colonial possessions, or our trade and commerce, either in the East or West. Her naval power was, to all intents and purposes, totally annihilated. What remained of Holland now consisted merely in her soil, canals, and strong forts. Such was its reduced situation, that France could not draw any resources from it whatever. It therefore never could have been an object of jealousy to this country, otherwise than in a maritime point of view. Now that we had deprived it of its maritime strength, what had we to fear? What advantage was to be derived by sending our troops against that country? He desired Ministers to shew that any other effect could be produced by retaining Holland, even if we obtained possession of it, than that of retaining a place where our brave countrymen would be sure to find their graves. It might be said, perhaps, that the invasion of Holland, when by our first exertions we had given the people an assurance of success, would be seconded by large bodies of its inhabitants, and consequently that in such case a trifling force would be sufficient to rescue them: if the fact should prove so, he would not dispute the proposition; but he begged leave to ask, what circum-

stances had ever occurred to induce a persuasion, that the number of persons in Holland who wished to throw off their dependence upon the Government of France was considerable; or that a small force could have any effect in compelling them? Was there any man who would say the people of Holland had shewn the least disposition to free themselves from the yoke of France? If Ministers were in possession of any documents that tended to prove any such circumstances, why did they not produce them? As they did not, he was not bound to give credit to their existence; and they must allow him to doubt the fidelity of the reports which had been circulated to that effect, especially after he had seen so large an army of the allies joined by so few Dutchmen; after he had seen that above fourteen or fifteen thousand of our troops, exclusive of our allies, had not been able to effect any material progress in the country; and when, after the expenditure of so much blood and treasure, we were precisely in the situation where we had begun. These were facts, which, it was with regret he observed, gave very little hopes of the expedition being attended with any benefits to this country. But let gentlemen, who were giving their sanction to such an expedition, contemplate the burdens which England would be taking upon herself by such a system of expenditure as it rendered necessary; and what was the object to be attained? He saw none, nor did he think, after the acquisition of the navy, there was the least probability of reaping any farther advantage worthy the risk of endeavouring to obtain it. Here Mr. Tierney proceeded to calculate the precise number of men sent from this country to Holland, computing them in the whole at something short of 30,000 men, observing that even with this force no effectual advantage had been obtained with respect to the main object of the expedition. But it had been said, that in the event of rescuing Holland from the dominion of France, it was necessary that England should take an active part. Admitting this, yet was it not taking an active part when England received into her pay an army of 45,000 Russians, exclusive of near 30,000 continental troops before subsidized by her? Was it necessary after this she should send 30,000 of her own troops, to assist those already in her pay? and was it not too much to ask Parliament to sanction a principle, by which Government would be enabled to keep employed at one time on the Continent, at the expence of this country, an army, consisting altogether of 100,000 men. He then proceeded to calculate the expence of such a system of carrying on war, urging the enormity of that expenditure as a reason why Parliament should pause before they sanctioned the increase of it. He next stated, that if he knew the ob-

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ject of the continuance of the war on the Continent, he should be better enabled to make up his mind as to the expediency of it. If it was carried on, in order by crippling France to negotiate for peace with more sanguine hopes of success, he could not disapprove of the motive; but as far as he had ever been able to collect, he understood the ultimate object of it was the overthrow of the French Government. Now he begged leave to ask how the present Government could be overthrown in France by killing Dutchmen in Holland?—"a laugh"—He observed, that upon so grave and serious a subject, in which the lives of so many were concerned, a little less gaiety would better become the right honourable gentleman opposite to him. He thought he had been speaking a language not likely to have been sneered at. However they might laugh at what he said, this he was sure of, that if it did not influence the votes, it would meet the ideas of many who heard him. Supposing the object to be that of altering the Government of France, how could that be attained by any successes in Holland? He did not see how it could be produced, even if we were fortunate enough to take Holland, with the Netherlands, and even get possession of the persons of the five Directors. That the overthrow of the French Government was the object of Russia, he inferred from the declaration of war by that power against Spain; it was, he said, avowed in that declaration, that the object of Russia and her allies was the overthrow of the Government of France. Such a declaration from Russia became the more serious to this country, as she was an ally, with whom we acted in close concert, and consequently whose views must be the same as ours. But with the exception of Russia, what other Continental Power had Ministers been able to hire to say as much? Would the Emperor of Germany say so? Would Ministers say that the direct object the Emperor of Germany had in view was not his own aggrandizement? Would they say that he was acting in common concert with Great Britain and Russia for the overthrow of the French Government. It had been insinuated by gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, as if he had had an hankering fondness for a Republican form of Government; without thinking it at all necessary to contradict such an assertion, he would suppose, for the sake of argument, that he had not any such partiality, and that it would be a good thing to overturn the Republican Government of France. But could any one believe that this could be effected by the power of England and Russia? He next adverted to the situation of those countries which had been rescued from the dominion of France, observing, that with respect to Switzerland and Italy, the countries so wrested from them had done nothing more

than shift masters, without gaining their former independence. Who could say that the dominions of the King of Sardinia had done any more than change hands? If the power of the King of Sardinia, or any other Prince, was taken from him, what did it signify whether it was taken by the Directory of France, or a Crowned Monarch? He observed, that the prospect of overthrowing the French Government was as distant as ever. The object had been avowedly declared to France, and the immediate consequence of it had been, that that Government had taken every measure of precaution to counteract the intentions of its enemies. From the instant the speeches of the right honourable gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been proclaimed to the French Government, they had proceeded with new vigour to render abortive the threats contained in them; and the stronger the measures to destroy the French Government, the greater tendency had they had to raise up friends in France for the protection of it. Under every circumstance, he thought himself bound to desire the House to pause, before they hazarded sending an additional number of troops to the Continent. With respect to the principle of the bill, he did mean to oppose it; but he repeated, that as he could not give his sanction to the application of the force to be raised by the bill, he should feel no difficulty in negating its passing into a law. He could not approve of Ministers crippling this country by going on with these continental crusades—[Hear! hear!]
—What, he added, were they, but crusades?—What was a crusade but a vast army engaged in an extravagant project? If Ministers could make out that the object for which they had employed so vast an army was not an extravagant one, then he would admit that they were not carrying on a crusade. He concluded by again stating, that, abstractly considered, he did not object to the system of incorporating the Militia into the army; but to the application of that system, by sending the men so incorporated to the Continent, he, as a Member of Parliament, in the discharge of his duty, could not give his assent. He was persuaded all he could say on the subject would have but little effect; but he, however, felt a satisfaction in entering his protest against a measure, which he was persuaded was dangerous and unconstitutional.

Mr. SECRETARY AT WAR said, nobody could contend, from any thing that passed in the debate, or that accompanied the manner in which the measure was brought forward, that the honourable gentleman, in acceding to it, would thereby pledge himself to the use to which it might be hereafter applied. Nothing whatever had fallen from his right honourable friend who introduced it, to

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warrant, in the remotest degree, any such apprehension. When a disposable force was applied for, it might, no doubt, induce an opinion, that it was not without having some object in view; but when that object was not proposed, or formed any part of the subject of consideration; when, in short, the very thing proposed to be done—the conversion of the Militia into a disposable force—was one with which the honourable gentleman expressed himself perfectly satisfied, it was strange he should object to what, in fact, he had previously approved of. There was another conclusion, equally unwarrantable, attempted to be drawn from the proposal of the present measure. The honourable gentleman was pleased to think, that it could be only the result of the difficulty of procuring men for the regular service, and therefore only an extraordinary mode of recruiting. That there was a great difficulty, in finding men to fill or augment the troops of the line, he readily admitted; but this was not in consequence of a waste of men, or any defect of population; it was owing to the state of the country which obliged it to maintain two armies—one for defence, and the other for offensive operations. That the population of the country was greater than it ever had been, no man could dispute; but still, however increased, it was not sufficient to furnish two armies. So far he had ventured to observe on the necessity and policy of this mode of providing a disposable force; but with respect to the advantages of such a force, when obtained, he thought there would be no difference of opinion, because he could not conceive that any body could object to a disposable force, though not to be disposed of. He should be glad to know what there was in the quality of a disposable force which rendered it less desirable than one that was not so. A disposable force was equally applicable to offensive and defensive operations. Its fitness for the one case did not affect its aptitude for the other. But of what use, it might be asked, was this disposable force, if not disposed of? Was it nothing to possess strength without using it? Was it nothing to awe the enemy by a force, from which, without their own aggression on our coasts, they hitherto considered themselves secure? Now, as to a purely defensive war, the course so strongly urged by the honourable gentleman; a people, he admitted, might be reduced to that situation, but still he must contend that it was a very disadvantageous one, for in war the most effectual way to annoy the enemy was, instead of patiently waiting until opportunity or advantage prompted him to attack, to be, on the contrary, constantly attacking him. In a defensive war, the parties were never on equal terms. It was precisely that sort of contest,

Ubi tu pulsas ego vapulo tantum.

where one man strikes and the other bears all the blows. Yet this was the species of war so highly approved of, in which we were to submit tamely to attack whenever the enemy chose to make it. The present, however, he contended, was not merely a defensive war, and therefore the necessity of having a disposable force became too apparent to require farther observation. He would now advert to the argument of the honourable gentleman, in which he said, "Let England lock herself up within her own shores, and leave the Powers on the Continent to fight their own battles." He begged pardon if he did not state the words correctly; he believed, indeed, the honourable gentleman added, as "she had hitherto done, by the efforts of her navy, and by granting subsidies to foreign states." He was also pleased to give her credit for offensive operations, so far as respected the taking of the Helder; and having thus defined the part he would have the country to confine herself to, he asked, was not this a fair share? This he conceived was a narrow and illiberal policy. It was advising, as if there were a sort of contribution set on foot, to which each was to subscribe a certain portion without respect to his relative means and ability. It was, if he might be permitted to use a vulgar expression, the aptness of which may sometimes compensate for its coarseness, like "cabbaging from our own coat." By cutting our cloth scantily, we were only cutting away the means of our own defence. If then we cheated ourselves, if we curtailed and cribbed from our means of defence, what was the policy recommended, but a narrow and ungenerous system, which must ultimately defeat its own views? But the honourable gentleman had also said, we possess the command of the seas, and therefore let our offensive operations be confined to that element. The command of the seas was, no doubt, as essential to our undertaking, but was not alone sufficient to restore Europe to the state from which she was pulled down by the tyranny and arms of the French Republic. To confine our operations to the seas was, in fact, little less than to limit us to defensive measures. However triumphant our ships might ride on the ocean, they could not touch the enemy, unless they thought fit to come forth with their fleets to meet us. The question then was, were we so circumstanced as to be perfectly safe and free from the remotest apprehension of danger, while there was a Republic in France, with the power it now or lately possessed, unrestrained by any offensive operation on our part in the execution of its design against us and all Europe? However great he considered our strength and security, he was certain nobody could maintain the affirmative of this proposition. For the utmost our fleets could effect, he would refer to the late glorious and heroic achievement of

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Sir Sidney Smith. What could his ships with all their skill and prowess have done at Acre, if the burning zeal and ardour of his mind had not carried that gallant officer out of his ships. Had he not engaged in a most heroic enterprize on land, would Acre have been saved? And had Buonaparte advanced through Syria and proceeded against Europe, to endanger perhaps again our ally the Emperor even at Vienna, would this have no effect on the safety of England? Was this, then, doing nothing for the defence of the country? And, looking at this wonderful exploit, was it possible not to see how essential, with all our advantages, offensive operations on land as well as sea must be to our safety? This, however, was a larger question than he had now either time or opportunity to enter into. He would, therefore, on this part of the subject, content himself with observing generally, that no man of plain sense, taking a full, fair, and liberal view of the country, and the means essential for its safety and prosperity, could give into the idea that we ought not to engage as far as possible in our endeavours to repress the power of France, and effect the deliverance of Europe. We should therefore contribute our efforts in deciding the fate of Europe, so far at least as might be necessary to our own safety; for nobody could say that we were safe formerly, when the power and influence of France were undiminished; or that we would be now safe, were she to recover what she lately possessed, but of which she was deprived by the aid of British co-operation, in concert with the efforts of our allies. This he thought might be deemed sufficient on the immediate question before the House; but the honourable gentleman was pleased to introduce another topic, and adverted to the object of the war, though certainly extraneous to the subject of debate. On this point, therefore, he would take this opportunity to set the honourable gentleman right, as he seemed to have misconceived the sentiments of him and his friends, so far as they had declared themselves on the subject. He was desirous to recollect the identical expression of the honourable gentleman, that he might state it fairly. The substance of it, he believed, however, correctly was, that the reduction of France was not the object of His Majesty's Ministers, but the total overthrow and destruction of the French Government. On this subject, he had more than once declared his opinion; and, therefore, the honourable gentleman must have forgot that he had already repeated, that neither the one or the other, but that both were his object, and the object of those with whom he acted. But though these were their objects, it did not follow that the war must be carried on until they should be attained under all possible circumstances and contingencies. He had pushed

these principles himself as far as any body, but he never went the length of pledging the country to such an unqualified undertaking. Undoubtedly, the restoration of Monarchy in France was "a consummation devoutly to be wished for;" but, however desirable such an end, or, however laudable the efforts employed to effect it, nobody could answer for its completion, because nobody could undertake that the people of France would like it. Nobody was more sensible than himself of the impossibility of forcing a Government on a country, against the will of its inhabitants. To force a Government on a people, contrary to their habits and dispositions, and to which they were hostile in sentiment, was impracticable; and with such a consciousness about him, he must be the first to condemn such an attempt. The honourable gentleman and he were, therefore, agreed in the principle, and perfectly at issue upon the fact. To remove all misunderstanding, he would now say, that no power, whatever its nature or extent, allied or single, could compel France to accept a Monarchy against the will of her people; but his firm persuasion, at the same time, was, that the people of France did really wish for it; and therefore it was that he hoped for its completion. The honourable gentleman, or his friends at least, seemed to have a tenderness for the Republic; they wished for the establishment of the Republic, one and indivisible; and the argument by which they supported their opposition to any attempt against the Republic resolved itself into this, that the Government of France was a thing beyond our concern as a separate, independent nation, and that ours was a purely English interest, to which every interference with the internal affairs of others was totally foreign. Now, he would tell these gentlemen, as an Englishman, judging purely from English views, and actuated by as sincere a regard for English interest as any of them, that there was nothing so desirable, or likely to contribute to English interest, as the restoration of Monarchy in France. He did not, therefore, consider whether the people of France were likely to enjoy most happiness and prosperity under a Republican or a Monarchical form of Government; nor could the gentlemen, who would confine us to English interest, consistently plead any such considerations. As an Englishman, well knowing that the restoration of Monarchy in France must be desirable to this country, on that ground alone, without any consequent advantages from such an event to the people of France themselves, he must wish for it. He begged pardon for troubling the House so long on a subject that might be considered irrelevant. As to the real question, it lay in a narrow compass, and the honourable gentleman's argument might be answered in a few words. The honour-

able gentleman would be he would head, and him in a

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able gentleman thought that by voting for a disposable force he would be engaging himself in the future application of it. Now he would undertake to relieve him from all apprehensions on that head, and assured him his assent to the measure would not involve him in any such engagement.

Mr. TIERNEY, in explanation, said, that the manner of asking for the present disposable force, and every other circumstance attending the introduction of the measure, plainly indicated the purpose for which it was wanted. There were certain passages in the address presented to His Majesty, and in the preamble to the bill, alluding to the late happy effects and successes resulting from the principle of the measure proposed, so far as it had been acted upon. He must therefore consider them as applying to the services of the Militia in Holland; so that reading the preamble to the bill, and looking at the mode and circumstances under which it was brought forward, he found nothing to induce him to alter his opinion; that in giving his vote for the incorporation of the Militia with the troops of the line, he was voting for their application in the same way in which they had been hitherto employed.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS admitted that there were many allusions to the manner in which the measure was brought forward, to our glorious successes, but these did not amount to a pledge that the whole or any part of the force proposed to be obtained should be sent to Holland. The words of the preamble were "disposable force to be applied to such purposes as His Majesty may think proper." Now there were many objects to which such a force might be usefully applied, exclusive of Holland. At the same time, he would not have it insinuated that there were any circumstances to discourage us from the latter object; but, on the contrary, that the expedition had been attended with the happiest effects.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he wished very much to avoid entering into the particulars of the expedition to Holland. The circumstance of our army there was a subject of great delicacy, and he would gladly refrain from a discussion that might give birth to dependency in the country. Neither did he approve of what had fallen from his honourable friend near him, when he said he would have no objection to the incorporation of the whole Militia with the troops of the line. This was a position to which he could never accede. The Militia establishment was a wise, a salutary, and constitutional system, and as such he wished to see it placed and maintained on a proper footing. Leaving, however, these subjects, he would advert to a point to which he felt his attention particularly called. The right honourable gentleman opposite to him (Mr

Windham) had touched on the general object of the war. He said, that the restoration of Monarchy in France, however desirable, ought not to be attempted, unless the majority of the people were in favour of such a change. Now he had no doubt, but the candour and consistency of the right honourable gentleman would apply the same principle to Holland. It had been allowed from the beginning, that, in our views respecting Holland, conquest was not the object, but the deliverance of that country from the power and influence of the French Republic. This avowal certainly implied a confidence that the majority of the people were anxious to be delivered from the situation from which it was proposed to relieve them. Now, from the first moment in which we embarked in this enterprise, what manifestation had we of such a desire on their part, except the single instance of the surrender of their fleet? This, too, was the result of a mutiny; and, however he might rejoice in the event, he could wish it had been effected in some other way. From whence this mutiny arose, whether from treachery, cowardice, corruption, or dislike to their Government, not having the means of information, he was not capable to decide. The result, however, was an indisposition on the part of the Dutch sailors to fight our brave tars, and their fleet was accordingly taken. But, admitting that this conduct was not in any manner influenced by the approved valour of our seamen and the dread of resistance, there were many circumstances which diminished the weight that would otherwise attach to it. There was a great difference between the situation of the Dutch seamen and the people under the Government from which it was proposed to deliver them. The conduct, therefore, of the seamen, whatever it might be, could not be assumed as a manifestation of the sentiments of the people residing in the interior of the country. Their situations were totally different, and therefore their causes of complaint against the existing Government might be totally distinct. But when this example set by the Dutch seamen had not encouraged their countrymen to follow it, still less could it be regarded as a manifestation of a disposition in the majority of the people in favour of our enterprise. Ministers, he allowed, could not now enter into a detail of all the circumstances on which they may have entertained, or still entertained, such hopes. It must be presumed, that without such hopes they would not have embarked in such an undertaking. They acted under a great responsibility. But still he must say, that if they had not grounds to justify a strong conviction that the people of Holland were favourably disposed to our views, the enterprise should never have been attempted, or, at all events, should be now abandoned. There was another subject to which he conceived it

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said, proper to allude, as forming a part of the ground on which the expedition to Holland was undertaken. He meant the neutrality of Prussia. This was a subject by no means new : it formed a speculative point from the moment the business was first set on foot ; and he would ask, whether Ministers had not the most sanguine expectations of the co-operation of Prussia in their project respecting that country ? The co-operation of Prussia he considered the *sine qua non* of its success, and that, without it, the aid of the Emperor of Russia was nothing. In this consisted the whole mystery. If then the expedition was undertaken with the hope of the aid of Prussia, and co-operation of the Dutch, and that we have been disappointed in both, he hoped no false shame would induce Ministers to persevere in such an undertaking ; or, if they should attempt to do so, that this House would interpose its authority to restrain them. He should not, however, press the subject farther now, as we might hourly expect fresh intelligence from that country, and as he intended to resume it on an early day.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said—Sir, I rise only to speak a few words, particularly as the honourable gentleman says he will enter more at large into the subject on another day. I shall therefore now confine myself to an observation or two with respect to our perseverance in an enterprise for the deliverance of Holland. The honourable gentleman assumes it as a principle, that it is not right, or likely to prove successful, without the co-operation of Prussia. Now I take this opportunity of declaring, that this enterprise was planned on a scale of such magnitude and extent as was intended to place it independent of Prussia, and shew that we could command success without being indebted for it to her co-operation. As to the principle of the impolicy of forcing a Government upon any country, I admit it to be true, and what never should be attempted, without the co-operation of the people. How far we are, or are not justified in such expectation in Holland, I shall not say. Whatever may be the result, there is no danger of shame or mortified feeling in case of miscarriage. If we should not be able to succeed to the full extent of our expectation, the matchless, the glorious achievement already performed will be a full compensation. That result alone would be sufficient to justify the preamble of the bill, to kindle and enflame the zeal of the House, and stimulate it to adopt a measure that has already proved so successful. However, therefore, the honourable gentleman, while professing to avoid any thing that might lead the country to despond, may have adopted a style of argument likely to produce the effect he deprecates, nothing has happened to discourage us in the undertaking. With regard to such intelligence

as we may have received, the honourable gentleman, by admitting the impropriety of discussing it, has saved me the trouble of stating the reasons which render such a discussion improper. But from whatever sources this intelligence is derived, and whatever dependence is to be placed upon it, I am fortified with a better and more useful knowledge—the knowledge of human nature; the knowledge that there is no country on earth that has groaned and smarted beneath French Government and French Fraternity, that must not sigh and pant for its deliverance; therefore, unless Dutchmen have lost all the feelings of nature, we must have friends, if not in the arms, in the hearts and bosoms of the people. But to those, who make no allowance for the various causes which may for the moment restrain these feelings from breaking forth, is it nothing, that in the portion of land we have yet occupied, a portion, I admit, of no great extent, we find joy beaming on every countenance, and every individual congratulating us as friends and deliverers? If we know this to be the case, why shall we from an impatient feeling, from a delay of a few days in the completion of a glorious achievement, the magnitude of which might require as many months, let our hopes sink, and suffer ourselves to despond? An honourable gentleman says, he does not wish to excite despondency; but had he wished to do so, he could not have selected topics more calculated to produce the effect than those he has chosen. He says, that we are to pause. He tells us, we could only supply men by an unexampled mode of recruiting; and money, by an unexampled mode of finance. He admits this difficulty of raising men does not arise from a waste of blood, but from that zeal and spirit now locked up in the Militia from active service, and panting to be let loose. It is this which impedes the recruiting for regular service. Why, then, what is this unexampled mode of recruiting which we have discovered, but a rapid mode of collecting a body of men ready disciplined, and equal in prowess and spirit to the most veteran corps? And as to the unexampled mode of finance, what is it, but that, after encountering difficulties in the old mode, by many deemed insurmountable, we have discovered a new one for supplying our expences, on such an improved principle, that now, in the 7th year of the war, we find ample resources, accompanied with all the flattering circumstances the most sanguine could expect in peace—increasing trade, wealth, and prosperity? Sir, I beg pardon for troubling the House so long; but I own nothing touches me more than when I see it insisted, on weak and insufficient grounds, that we should abandon the contest in which we are engaged, at a moment when better hopes may be entertained than at any time since its beginning.

The bill was then ordered to be brought up, was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on the following day.

Friday, September 27.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS moved the order of the day, for the second reading of the Militia bill, which was agreed to without any opposition. He then moved that it should be committed.

Mr. NICHOLLS said he did not mean to oppose the bill, or to object to the Government having an additional disposable force. Though he was convinced of the calamities incident to the carrying on war, yet he did not object to carry on the present war, if it was absolutely necessary. He saw no probability of its termination, except in the event of his Majesty's Ministers being convinced that the attainment of its object was impracticable, and that their good sense would induce them to abandon it. With respect to the Secretary at War, he was persuaded he was not so void of integrity as to pursue a contest, the object of which was impracticable. As to certain of his colleagues, he was aware that they had expressed their opinions that this was *bellum ad internecinem*. Having made these observations, he stated that he had been in France in the year 1789, at which time he was on terms of intimacy with the Abbé Raynal. He said he was led to observe the dispositions of the *Avocats* and *Economists*: that the latter desired the improvement of agriculture and commerce, and with that view wished for the destruction of the feudal system, and the noblesse. The Abbé Raynal had observed to him, that the contest between the people and the noblesse was as 23,700,000 to 300,000. He was proceeding in this strain of observation, when

Mr. SPEAKER asked him, whether he thought it possible his observations could apply to a question as to the commitment of a bill, to which he had said he had not the least objection?

Mr. SECRETARY AT WAR began to answer the observation of the last Speaker respecting the present war having been stated to be a war *ad internecinem*; but observed, that he could not reply to the honourable gentleman, without being liable to the interruption of the Speaker for irregularity; and, therefore, he would defer his observations till a future period.

Mr. NICHOLLS explained: after which the bill was committed for the Monday following.

Saturday, September 28.

No business of importance.

Monday, September 30.

Colonel GASCOYNE said, he held a petition of a nature that called for the attention of the House in an extraordinary degree ; it came from the merchants of Liverpool and Lancaster, who stated themselves to be under circumstances of embarrassment, on account, he observed, of the very great failures at Hamburgh. He said he could not clearly account for this embarrassment, but it was a generally received opinion that it arose out of the late failures in Hamburgh. In the West-India islands he said the merchants had been under the necessity of giving much longer credit than usual, and the debts now due to them could not all be collected in with the dispatch to which they had looked, and this made it impossible for them, in their turns, to fulfil all their engagements punctually as they had been accustomed to do. Their trade was also very much enlarged since hostilities had commenced between France and America, of which the returns were not yet made, and this was another source of the temporary embarrassment, although it would produce ultimate profit to the petitioners.

The object of this petition was to have the sanction of Parliament to a small temporary loan ; and they were aware that the mere sanction of the House to their proposal would in a great measure do away the evil of which they had now to complain.

He did not conceive that there could be any objection to this measure, after he had stated the circumstances of the petitioners ; but as some might think it strange that this application should come from Liverpool and Lancaster rather than any other place, it was necessary that he should state that the business of these merchants was different from those of London—the latter being mere agents for the West-India planters ; the former being both great exporters and importers of goods and manufactures, &c. In the course of their trade they had given bills which were now about to become due, and for the discharge of which they were not at present provided. The sum, for which they requested the sanction of Parliament to a plan for the payment of, was very small, in comparison of the property they possessed, it being only about half a million for Liverpool and Lancaster together ; whereas it could be proved, from the customhouse books and other documents, which could have no deception in them, that there was property to the amount of two

millions and an half in the possession of the merchants of Liverpool only.

The question now before the House was not, whether the price of sugar should be lowered, but whether the West-India merchants in Liverpool and Lancaster should be enabled to live and carry on their trade through this temporary difficulty. He knew that some gentlemen might observe that very large fortunes had been made by sugar merchants: he admitted that some handsome fortunes had been made in that trade; but in considering all subjects of this kind it should never be forgotten that a large capital embarked in any business ought to produce large returns; and such he believed to have been the case in the sugar trade. He then observed that the trade of the present year was much larger than it had been last year; but that, owing to circumstances which could not easily have been foreseen, the petitioners could not immediately avail themselves of the value of the property they had in hand. It might be said that sugar, like other articles, might be left to find its level at the market; but that, he was confident, would not answer the purpose, as this was a temporary pressure; and nothing but the sanction of Parliament to a plan which the petitioners had in view, would answer the purpose. Their object was to obtain leave to issue Exchequer bills to a limited amount and a limited time. He therefore now moved for leave to bring up the petition.

Mr. SPEAKER desired the honourable Member to state the prayer of the petition.

He stated it to be, that the petitioners might have leave to issue exchequer bills to a limited amount, and for a time to be limited; or that they might have such other relief as to the House should seem meet.

Mr. SPEAKER asked, if the proposition stated in the petition, and which was prayed for, was such as might eventually bring a charge upon the public?

Colonel GASCOYNE said, there was no chance of that; for the whole responsibility would be cast upon the merchants themselves, whose property was most abundantly sufficient, not only for this, but for ten times the amount.

Mr. SPEAKER said, that if, in the event of the merchants petitioners not being able to make good their engagement, the public was proposed to be answerable, this petition could not be received without a recommendation from the Crown.

Colonel GASCOYNE observed, that after the sale of the goods now actually in the hands of the petitioners, the surplus, after the payment of all their engagements, would be immense.

Mr. SPEAKER said, that still, if in any event, after these sales, any failure should happen, and that in the event of such failure it was proposed the public should become responsible, it was absolutely necessary, before the petition could be received, that there should be a recommendation from the Crown.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, it was certainly necessary in point of form in this case that there should be a recommendation from the Crown; but it was form merely; because, as had been accurately stated by the honourable gentleman who proposed to present the petition, there could be no risk to the public by assenting to the prayer of it, since the goods intended to be pledged as a security for it were upwards of four times the amount in value of the money to be advanced; in addition to which, if any addition were necessary, there were the names of merchants so respectable of themselves as to leave very little doubt upon the security in this case.

He did not enter into any particulars, nor deliver any binding opinion upon the subject now before the House, considered in the light of a general proposition; and on the first view of such a thing he should be very averse to giving the credit of the public to the solvency or the prudence of adventuring individuals: but he had considered this case a good deal, and he thought it one in which the public might interfere with safety and propriety; and the House would be the more inclined to that opinion, as the case of the petitioners did not arise out of any rash speculations of their own; but they had laid in unusually large crops in the hope of selling much upon the Continent, but which prospect had been impeded by sudden failures in one part of it, and also by the present posture of political affairs in another part of the Continent, but which he hoped would soon turn out favourable to this country. Under these circumstances he should hope this petition would be received.

Mr. BUXTON said, that this matter was of rather a novel nature. He confessed, that after such a price as sugars had borne, and for so long a time, he could hardly expect that such an application as this should be made for the relief of Sugar Dealers. Speculations of this kind in general should be left to find their own level, and therefore if he gave way to this particular case on account of the special circumstances of it, he hoped it would not be quoted as a precedent. Merchants were not to expect these aids as of course, any more than any other class of men; he said this the rather because it was observable the landed interest of this country never had any such assistance. He hoped that, if this favour was to be granted to the merchants, it was not to become a common practice.

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Mr. SPEAKER asked, if there was any recommendation from the Crown?

Mr. Chancellor PITT answered in the affirmative.

The petition was then brought up, read, and referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. LUSHINGTON said, he had a petition, grounded upon similar circumstances. It was a petition on the part of the planters and merchants of Grenada and St. Vincent's. They were under the necessity of coming to the House for relief. The pressure on them at present was such as they could not support. This arose from a cessation of the sale of those articles of West-India produce, from which they derived their livelihood. This, he observed, although at present an inconvenience, arose from a cause which we ought not to regard with regret; for it arose chiefly from the pressure which was made upon the frontier of the enemy, and also from the present state of Holland, a trade with which he hoped would soon be opened. Upon these grounds the petitioners hoped the House would take upon itself the consideration of their case, and afford them relief. The petition stated the names of the petitioners, and then stated that several instalments of a loan were due from them, which at present they were unable to pay; and praying that they might have farther time for that purpose, and have such relief as to the House should seem meet.

Mr. SPEAKER asked, if there was any recommendation from the Crown? Being answered in the affirmative, the question was put, and the petition was brought up, read, and ordered to be laid on the table.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that owing to very unfavourable circumstances with regard to the harvest, it was thought advisable for the present to stop distilleries in Scotland. He therefore moved, that leave be given to bring in a bill to prohibit, for a time to be limited, the making of Low Wines, Spirits, &c. in Scotland. Granted.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS moved the order of the day, which was to go into a Committee of the whole House on the bill for enabling His Majesty to accept of the services of an additional number of the Militia as may voluntarily offer to serve, under certain restrictions, &c.

The order of the day being read,

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS moved, That the Speaker do now leave the chair.

Mr. JONES said, he was not an enemy to the bill now before the House; if he was, he should have said so at the time a motion was made for leave to bring it in. He did not wish for any delay

in this business ; if he did, he should have avowed it, and not have shrunk from the statement of it. He thought Ministers entitled to praise for planning the capture of the Dutch fleet ; he wished as much as any man could wish for the deliverance of Holland. He thanked every officer, seaman, and soldier concerned in the expedition ; they had done all that human beings could do, but they could not surmount impossibilities ; and, without a co-operation of the Dutch people, he was afraid that our troops, brave as they were, must be sacrificed. He wished for the deliverance of the Dutch people ; but without efforts on their own part, we could never accomplish that object. He wished not only the deliverance of Holland, but of every country and territory that was now groaning under the galling, degrading, odious, infamous yoke of the French Republic. He wished all people free from the detestable slavery of France ; France, whose name was only to be written in blood. He did not wish to speak unworthily of our enemies, but France had been a prey to successive and successful tyrants, and had now her dictator *Sieyes*. But to return, he thought that this bill might be a measure of necessity, and therefore, although he lamented that necessity, he could not oppose it.

Doct^r LAWRENCE said that the bill appeared to him in its present form hostile to a principle which he looked upon as sacred ; but as it might be altered in the Committee so as to do away the objection he had to it, in the same manner as had been done in another bill, although the objection was an objection upon the principle, for an amendment might be of a kind so material as to alter even the principle ; as these points, he said, might be thus settled, he should not oppose the motion for going into a Committee on the bill, but he should oppose the whole of it on the third reading, if it appeared then, as it did now, to him, to intrench upon a sacred principle which he thought it was the duty of the House to support.

Mr. I. H. ADDINGTON said that we obtained the Dutch fleet under the most solemn engagement to protect and preserve it for its lawful Sovereign ; and we embarked in this expedition under the confident, and, he trusted, a well-founded hope, that the people of Holland might be brought to the standard of loyalty, to its legitimate Prince ; an end not yet accomplished, but towards the attainment of which the present was one of the measures which were thought advisable. We took the fleet for the legitimate Prince and Sovereign of Holland ; we promised our exertions to restore to him the provinces ; and should we now stop short upon the capture of the Dutch fleet ? He should be sorry to apply to Administra-

tion any unjustifiable epithet ; but he could not help saying, the stopping suddenly short after the capture of the Dutch fleet would be a species of political swindling of which he thought His Majesty's Ministers incapable, and would be a conduct that would be highly injurious to the honour of this country.

Mr. JONES said he had no doubt but that His Majesty's Ministers would take care not to act improperly by the Stadtholder.

Mr. TIERNEY thought the language of the honourable gentleman who spoke last but one rather alarming. If we were at all events to persist in the restoration of Holland to its lawful Sovereign, and are to be called swindlers if we do not, our case is a very hard one. For his part he was satisfied with the capture of the Dutch fleet ; but the honourable gentleman made much more of it, and seemed to insist on our going on for the capture of Holland at all events. He should wish to understand the terms under which we have taken that fleet. Was it a condition in the surrender of that fleet, that we were at all events to pursue the attempt of restoring the former Government of Holland ?

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that if there had been any secret attending the surrender of the Dutch fleet, upon any state reasons, it must be obvious that in that House there could be no answer given to the question just put by the honourable gentleman ; but the truth of the matter was, that no agreement of any such sort was entered into between those who, on the part of this country, captured that fleet, and those by whom it was surrendered ; we were under no such engagement as the honourable gentleman alluded to ; neither did his honourable friend, he was confident, mean to say, that we were at all events and hazards to procure the emancipation of all Holland from the French yoke, and to restore its legitimate Government ; his honourable friend had no such meaning, nor could his words justify any such inference ; he had, indeed, expressed a sentiment which every Member in the House, he trusted, would approve of ; which, in substance, was this—that if we took the Dutch fleet under the promise to restore it to its legitimate Sovereign, and the fleet being at our disposal, and we afterwards used no endeavours whatever to restore the lawful Government of Holland, but should suddenly stop after we had gained our own ends, we might be accused of political swindling ; but how did this apply ? If it applied to our being bound at all events to pursue the plan of the restoration of the Government of Holland, however difficult, impracticable or imprudent the attempt—that we should run all risks and hazards too in trying to accomplish it, then, indeed, the observation of the honourable gentleman would have been just ; but the sentiment of his honour-

able friend was no more than that, he trusted, of the House at large ; it was only that we were bound in point of honour and conscience to use such endeavours to restore that country to its lawful Government as are agreeable to the rules of war and the principles of prudence—and now that he was upon the subject, he would just add, that he thought that could not be obtained without the co-operation of the people of Holland ; and to add farther, that not only many things had passed to shew that expectation to be well founded in its first formation, but that up to the present moment that expectation has been strongly confirmed ; and also that we have accounts since the subject was last discussed in that House, of the operations of the army as well as the operations of our fleet, which went strongly to confirm that opinion and that expectation. In a very short time after the approach of our arms, the inhabitants of one of the towns in Holland received our men with joy as their deliverers. He hoped this sentiment would soon be generally expressed, and he agreed with his honourable friend in wishing we might succeed in restoring that country to its lawful Government ; nor had the honourable gentleman any reason to doubt what was the import of the words which seemed to have alarmed him.

Mr. Speaker then left the chair.

The House went into a Committee upon the bill, and after several amendments had been proposed and received, the report was ordered to be brought up on the following day.

Tuesday, October 1.

No debate.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, October 2.

Lord GRENVILLE rose, in consequence of the notice which he had given on a former day, of his intention to move the thanks of the House to a noble Lord at the head of the Government in India, and to the gallant officers who had, by their unexampled bravery and skill, effectually achieved one of the most brilliant and important services that had been rendered to their country during the progress of the present very arduous, critical, and extraordinary war, by the capture of the capital of the most powerful and restless foe

to the British interests in India, and by the annihilation of the tyrant himself, who had resorted to the basest perfidy to undermine our existence in the East, and had manifested the most unparalleled cruelty whenever the chance of war placed any of His Majesty's subjects, whether officers or privates, within his power. A service of such magnitude, all its circumstances considered, was inestimable, and well entitled those to whose valour and skill it was to be ascribed to the grateful thanks of their country, and of that House: but in proportion to its importance, it was due to the honour and character of the wise and brave man, who had so well merited the praise and gratitude of every Englishman, that every part of the transaction should be fully known and understood, and as the prints of the papers formerly moved for, had been only that day laid on the table, and he had since found it necessary to move for an additional paper, which, though it had been presented, was not yet printed, he hoped their Lordships would agree with him, that it would be right to postpone the motion of thanks for the present, and postpone it to a future day, when every noble Lord should have had full opportunity of making himself completely master of the subject. He would therefore give notice that he meant on Friday next to move the vote of thanks, and he accordingly moved that the Lords be summoned for that day. Ordered.

Lord Grenville rose again and said, that with regard to the other matters, with respect to which he had given notice of his intention of moving the thanks of the House, the same grounds of postponement did not apply, and therefore he would submit to the House his reasons for thanking Lieut. General Sir Ralph Abercromby, who was well entitled to the most honourable testimony of applause which that House could bestow on a British subject. That gallant officer had been entrusted with the command of a most important expedition, the destination of which had been so well covered by secrecy, that the enemy were distracted as to its object, and knew not which part of the coast in their possession to prepare for defence, till tempestuous weather accidentally made known to them the point where a landing would be attempted, and thus enabled them to collect a force sufficiently large to repel our invasion. Notwithstanding this adverse circumstance, by the bravery, skill, and judgement of Sir Ralph Abercromby, and the matchless spirit of the small body of troops under his command, every difficulty was surmounted; a landing effected in the face of the enemy; that enemy more powerful in force, numbers and artillery, successfully repelled, and the principal fort and arsenal of the Dutch Republic secured and taken possession of; by which event His Majesty's fleet was afforded the

means of rescuing from the power of the French the naval force in the Texel, and the inhabitants of that part of Holland were enabled to evince their attachment to the original and ancient Government of their country, and shake off the odious and galling yoke of French tyranny. Among all the various victories and glorious incidents that had attended the British arms during the progress of the present war, his Lordship said he knew not one more honourable to the commanders, officers and men, than this great and important adventure, and the success that had attended it in every point of view; it was eminently serviceable to Great Britain, eminently serviceable to the common cause of our allies: to the latter every means of diminishing the inordinate power of the French Republic was essential; but to this country it was still more essential, to rescue from her gripe the usurped territories of our ancient friend and ally, and to render the coasts directly opposite to our shores no longer subject to the dangerous use that an inveterate foe might make of them against the British interests. His Lordship concluded with moving the thanks of the House "To Lieutenant General Sir Ralph Abercromby, Knight of the most Honourable Order of the Bath, for the distinguished gallantry and ability with which he effected his landing on the Dutch coast, and established his position in the face of a powerful enemy, and by securing the command of the principal fort and naval arsenal of the Dutch Republic, afforded to His Majesty's fleet the means of rescuing from the power of the French the naval force in the Texel;"—which passed *nem. diff.*

His Lordship next moved the thanks of the House to Lieutenant General Sir James Pulteney, Bart. Major Generals Francis D'Oyley, Eyre Coote, Harry Burrard, and John Moore, and the several officers of the army under the command of Lieutenant General Sir Ralph Abercromby, for their late gallant conduct, &c. &c.—which was resolved *nem. diff.*

His Lordship afterwards moved a resolution, that the House did highly approve of, and acknowledge the services of the non-commissioned officers, and private soldiers of the army serving under the command of Lieutenant General Sir Ralph Abercromby, at the attack of the Helder, on the coast of Holland, &c. &c.—which was also resolved *nem. diff.*

Resolved, that the Lord Chancellor communicate the said resolutions to his Royal Highness Field Marshal the Duke of York, Captain General of His Majesty's forces, and Commander in Chief of the allied army in Holland; and that his Royal Highness be requested by the Lord Chancellor to signify the same to the general and other officers referred to therein.

Earl SPENCER said, that what had fallen from his noble friend made it the less necessary for him to occupy much of the time of their Lordships. He rose for the purpose of moving the thanks of the House to Vice Admiral Mitchell, for his distinguished services in the expedition to Holland. His Lordship spoke of those services in terms of the warmest praise. He said a tempestuous season had arisen at an unusual part of the year, which rendered the keeping together so numerous a fleet of transports, and conducting them in safety to the object of their destination, a very arduous task, and such as required the utmost exertion of skill and judgement, but that Vice Admiral Mitchell, by his unwearied vigilance, attention, and good management, had contrived to surmount every danger, to land the troops destined for the service, to afford them great aid and assistance, and effectually to co-operate with the land forces, so as to contribute essentially to the success that had attended His Majesty's arms in the course of the expedition to Holland. Exclusive of this distinguished proof of uncommon zeal and equal judgement, Vice Admiral Mitchell, his Lordship said, had performed a still more valuable service to his country; a service of the first importance and magnitude. Unawed by the known difficulty and danger of the navigation of the Texel and the Zuyder Sea, the Vice Admiral had skilfully conducted his fleet through those seas, and to the astonishment of the Dutch Admirals, had placed them in such a position near to the Dutch squadron, that it emboldened the Dutch seamen to declare for the ancient establishment, and in consequence obliged the commanders to deliver up the whole squadron to the British force, and surrender prisoners of war. His Lordship dilated on this inestimable piece of service, and concluded with moving the thanks of the House "To Vice Admiral Mitchell, for the distinguished skill and perseverance with which, in spite of great and unforeseen difficulties, he kept collected, and conducted to the coast of Holland the numerous fleet under his command; for the zeal and readiness with which he co-operated with the land forces in their descent on the coast of Holland, and for the promptitude and ability by which he rescued the naval force of the Dutch Republic from the power of the French;"—which passed *nem. diff.*

The Earl next moved the thanks of the House to the several Captains and officers of the fleet under Vice Admiral Mitchell, for their able support and co operation with the land forces, &c. &c.—which was resolved *nem. diff.*

And afterwards moved, that the House highly approved and acknowledged the service of the seamen and marines on board the

ships under the command of Vice Admiral Mitchell, &c. &c.— which also passed *nem. diff.*

Earl Spencer rose again to call their Lordships' thanks to an officer of the navy for most distinguished services in a distant quarter of the globe. He had no doubt but that their Lordships already anticipated the person to whom he alluded, and felt that it must be Captain Sir William Sidney Smith, to whose brilliant exploits in Syria he meant to do justice. Such certainly was his intention, and he scarcely was master of words sufficiently strong to convey the full force of his feelings on the very interesting subject to which he wished to call their Lordships' attention. The value and importance of every instance of success ought to be judged by the proportion of the means with which the victor is furnished to enable him to achieve it; and surely when the small squadron that Sir Sidney Smith had under his command, and the limited force he was enabled to bring into the field, were compared with the numerous and powerful army of the enemy, headed by a leader who had long accustomed them to unvarying triumph and incessant victory, and the event of a siege of two months, of a town ill fortified and occupied by a garrison little used to the most ordinary means of resistance and defence, was considered, nothing could more forcibly excite general admiration and astonishment. After an almost incessant siege of sixty days, their Lordships had learnt from Sir Sidney Smith's comprehensive and satisfactory account of that important event, that in spite of the feebleness of the fortifications, and the weakness and want of skill of the garrison, that gallant Captain, by the bravery, assistance, and skill of his handful of officers and companions, from on board his squadron, was enabled, not merely to repel the attacks of a powerful and confident assailant, but to oblige them to quit the field, not only under circumstances of disgrace, but under circumstances the most degrading and calamitous. So uncommon a proof of prowess, valour, judgement and success entitled the officers who had manifested it to every possible praise, and though, his Lordship said, he was well aware that it was not usual for the thanks of the House to be voted to a single Captain, for his services, yet, on this occasion, that very circumstance entitled Sir William Sidney Smith the more to so signal a mark of the approbation of his country, as the services he had rendered in delivering Africa and part of Asia from the yoke of French Republican tyranny were perhaps equalled by few, possibly surpassed by none of the many brilliant achievements that had distinguished the British arms in the course of the present war. The Earl concluded by moving, "That the thanks of the House be given to Captain Sir William Sidney

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Smith, for the conspicuous skill and heroism by which he animated and directed the efforts of the Turkish forces, and of the small number of British officers and seamen under his command, in their long and successful defence of St. John d'Acre, on the coast of Syria, against the formidable and desperate attack of the French army under the command of Buonaparte."

Viscount HOOD said, he could not, on the present occasion, give a silent vote, highly as he approved of the motion of the noble Earl at the head of the Admiralty. He must take that opportunity of doing justice to the extraordinary merit of that brave and gallant officer, Sir William Sidney Smith, to whose spirited exertions, he was proud to confess, he had frequently been a witness, and been highly indebted on various occasions, when he had the honour to have that very deserving and meritorious officer under his command. His Lordship particularised the affair of burning the French ships at Toulon, in which important service he declared no officer had manifested a more active zeal, or a more judicious application of undaunted spirit than Captain Sir William Sidney Smith. Nor was that the only opportunity, his Lordship said, that he had been afforded of ascertaining the merits of the object of the present motion, and great and astonishing as his conduct had been at the siege of Acre, he was persuaded that his country might expect still more important services at his hands; he joined, therefore, most cordially in supporting the motion of the noble Earl.

Lord GRENVILLE said, he was perfectly sensible that it was unnecessary and fruitless for him to endeavour to add to the force of what had fallen on the subject of the motion then before the House from his noble friend near him, or the noble Admiral who had just sat down; but he could not help remarking in a very few words on the double contrast, that the conduct of Sir Sidney Smith and his adversary General Buonaparte afforded. Let their Lordships compare the modest letter of Sir Sidney Smith, on his success at the siege of Acre, with the arrogant and presumptuous proclamations of the French commander, after every one of his successes through a defenceless country, to which he had carried impiety, hostility, and devastation, contrary to every principle of justice and humanity. Let them also look at the contrast; Sir William Sidney Smith, made a captive by the chance of war, was refused to be considered as every other prisoner of war was, but shut up a close prisoner in the Temple at Paris, and debarred of every means of comfort and relief, in direct defiance of the law of nations, and all the established rules of civilized countries. Cruel as the treatment of Sir William Sidney Smith was, it was highly honourable to him, inasmuch as it

proved, that conscious of his high and enterprising spirit, his courage and his skill, the French Republic regarded him as a foe so greatly to be dreaded, that they were determined, at the risk of their own character, and at every hazard, to deprive his country of his valuable services. When Sir Sidney, by his ability and successful exertion, effected his escape from the Temple, what was his conduct on again being entrusted with a command? His very first act on his arrival in the East was to use his efforts to procure the liberation of some French prisoners who had been taken at the battle of the Nile, and detained in prison at Constantinople. His whole conduct in Syria was not more distinguished for bravery and skill than for humanity and tenderness to all at his mercy. It was, his Lordship said, he was persuaded, enough barely to mention these facts to impress their Lordships and the country with a deep sense of the exultation and pride which they must feel in viewing the strong contrast between the Republican General Buonaparte and the British Captain Sir William Sidney Smith! His Lordship heartily assented to the motion, which was agreed to *nem. diff.*

The thanks to the officers on board the ships under the command of Sir William Sidney Smith, for their great bravery and unremitting exertions which they manifested, both on shore and on board, in the successful defence of St. John D'Acre, on the coast of Syria, was moved and voted *nem. diff.* as was also a vote of approbation and acknowledgment of the services of the seamen and marines belonging to the ships under the command of Captain Sir William Sidney Smith.

The bill, relative to the farther application of the Militia corps was brought up by Mr. Secretary Dundas and others, and, on the motion of the Earl of Westmorland, read a first time, and notice given, that if the prints be upon the table to-morrow, it was intended to move that the bill be read a second time on the Friday following.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, October 2.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of Supply; and that the several estimates moved for by himself, Mr. Secretary at War, Mr. Sargent, and Mr. Wallace, should be referred to the said Committee.

Mr. Speaker having left the chair,

Mr. SECRETARY AT WAR said, it was not necessary at this period to state the whole of the estimates, as only part of the army estimates were intended to be voted, and those only for two months. He observed, that even those estimates he should present would possibly not be quite so accurate, as if they had been presented at a future period, and as they would be given when the whole of the estimates were laid before the House. The estimates he should now present consisted merely of a few articles; namely, the estimates of the army serving in Great Britain, and on the Continent; the remaining part of the army; the estimates for the Militia. The consideration of some of these, he observed, must necessarily be deferred—the estimates for barracks, including not only the expences for building, but the maintenance of the troops in barracks. He repeated, that if it should appear these estimates were not made out with all the accuracy they required, that they would be subject to future correction. He then moved, that the number of land forces should consist of 9,047; and that the sum of 510,000*l.* should be granted to His Majesty for maintaining the same to the 24th of February 1800.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he certainly had not any objection to the estimate; but by the manner in which the subject was now brought forward, it was impossible for the House to be prepared. He objected to voting the supplies at all in a Parliament called suddenly together as this was, at only a notice of fourteen days. The measure stated as the reason for calling the Parliament together in so unusual a manner was, that of enabling His Majesty to avail himself of an augmentation of the regular forces of the country by the diminution of the Militia. A measure of this kind, as he had already stated, he had no disposition to oppose: but Ministers were not content with this; for having first proposed that measure, which they had stated so far favoured of emergency as to require the immediate assembling of the Parliament, they now wish the supplies to be granted to His Majesty without the usual notice of forty days, without which Parliament never had been assembled for the purpose of voting supplies. An application of this sort was the more extraordinary, as the language held out in His Majesty's speech was, that a vote of supply would not at present be wanted. The House ought to be jealous of parting with the only weapon which could compel Ministers to call the Parliament together; he only meant to object to the precedent of calling Parliament together at a notice of fourteen days, in order to vote the supplies, particularly as the King's speech had inferred that those supplies were unnecessary. He how-

ever begged to say a word as to the probable deficiency of the supplies already granted. To shew the probability of such a deficiency, he alluded to the measure adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for stopping the distilleries of Scotland, but more particularly relied upon the deficiency of the income tax; from what he had heard, its produce would be considerably below the Chancellor of the Exchequer's last estimate of seven millions and a half; he believed it would not amount to six millions; he, however, was not able to ascertain whether that deficiency would be covered by the duties on land and malt. He objected to the mode now adopted of making up the public accounts; they were made up in so intricate a manner that plain country gentlemen could not understand them; and bringing them forward as had been done this night, tended to multiply their difficulties.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, it was his duty to reply in a few words to what the honourable gentleman had stated. He was surprised, that it should have been stated, that by the manner of making up the accounts, the difficulties in the way of country gentlemen's understanding them should have been multiplied. So far from this being true, he was persuaded there was no gentleman who applied himself at all to the subject, but must be convinced that whatever alterations had of late been introduced in the mode of making up the public accounts, had had for their object the simplifying instead of rendering them more complicated. There never had been a period when the public accounts had been so simple as at present, to those who took the trouble of understanding them—the endeavours of those whose duty it was had been directly applied to that object; had it not been so, perhaps the honourable gentleman would not have been able to have entered into so large a scope of observation upon them as he had at different times done; and, perhaps, also, it would not have been in his (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) power to have satisfied the House of the fallacy of his conclusions respecting them. He knew not on what ground the Parliament was called together, that it should be denied the exercise of its ordinary functions. The protest of the honourable gentleman against the exercise of those functions, he considered nothing else than an endeavour to fetter and restrain the inherent powers of Parliament. As to the objection he had made to voting the proposed supplies, it was, in fact, an objection to voting that species of supply for a short period, without which the measure for which Parliament had been convened could not be carried into execution; a supply which was the consequence of a measure sanctioned by the House, and in which the honourable gentleman himself had con-

curred. He stated that the attendance of Members in Parliament was much fuller at present than was likely to be at the period to which the honourable gentleman wished the supplies to be deferred; and observed, that if the House saw the necessity for the measure for which the supplies were granted, it must at the same time be convinced of the impropriety of deferring to vote those supplies till a period when the attendance might not be so numerous.

Mr. TIERNEY professed that he could not accurately make out the estimates. With regard to the argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the vote of the supplies was the necessary consequence of the measure for increasing the army, he admitted it might be so as to the supplies for the army; but how did it apply as to the supplies for the navy estimates? He had been accused of presumption in objecting to the vote of supply for carrying into effect a measure in which he had concurred. Whether he was guilty or not, he should leave others to decide; but he would appeal to the House whether it was not presumption in any Minister so to accuse him? Whether it was consistent with the duty of a Minister to use such language to a Member of Parliament? He would leave to the House to determine which of the two was the most likely to have been guilty of presumption, himself, or a Minister, who by his conduct had disgusted, and driven one part of the House of Commons from their attendance. He asserted that it was contrary to the proceedings of Parliament for any Member so to arraign a Member delivering his sentiments. As to the question, whether an instance could be produced where Parliament, by being called together at a short notice, had been precluded voting supplies, he confessed his recollection did not furnish him with one; but that circumstance did not lessen his objection to the House proceeding upon a business so different from the grounds stated for convening the Parliament. He was convinced, that in the treasury letter which had been sent to the right honourable gentleman's immediate friends, the subject of the Militia was stated as the sole reason for assembling Parliament. The right honourable gentleman had, on a former day, recurred to that fact, as an argument for opposing the call of the House, stating that the Members knew Parliament was assembled to consider of the reduction of the Militia. He was far from objecting to granting His Majesty the aid of an additional disposable force; but he could never consent that the supplies should be granted for any purpose unless Parliament had had the usual notice of forty days. He concluded by observing, that as His Majesty's speech had expressly stated no supplies at present were necessary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had now brought them forward, in

order that his friends, in case our arms were successful on the Continent, might go down to their constituents, and boast that, by granting the supplies, they had won Holland.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that he had already said sufficient to satisfy the House and the Country, and he did not think it necessary to add any thing farther.

The following sums were then moved as supplies for the estimates of the several subjects to which they refer, from the 25th of December 1799, to the 24th January 1800.

For defraying the expence of 9047 men, for guards and gar-	£.
rifons	510,596
Invalids, &c.	5,566
Plantations, &c.	166,488
Fencible Cavalry, &c.	92,636
Embodied Militia, &c.	232,998
Increased subsistence to innkeepers for quartering soldiers	40,000
Expences to be incurred by Barrack Masters	120,000
Officers of Ordnance for the Land Service	35,000
Ordinary Estimates of the Navy for two Lunar Months, from the 1st of January 1800	121,510
Extraordinary Estimates of ditto for ditto	115,625

The Report was ordered to be received on the next day ; and it was moved, that on Friday next the House should resolve into a Committee to consider farther of a Supply.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day, for the House to resolve into a Committee of Ways and Means.

The House resolved into the said Committee, and came to the following resolutions: " That the Land and Malt Duties should be continued till the 24th June, 1801 ; and that the sum of 2,500,000*l.* should be granted to His Majesty, by way of Loan, on Exchequer Bills."

The Chairman reported progress, and asked leave to sit again on Friday, to consider farther of Ways and Means.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS moved the order of the day for the third reading of the bill, to enable His Majesty to receive the extended services of the Militia.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he felt considerable objections to this bill, so far as it had for its object the re-establishment of the Stadtholder in his ancient government. That he thought was a measure which Ministers seemed to enter into with expectations too sanguine, and for every failure in which their responsibility would be very great. So far as the safety of His Majesty's dominions was concerned, no man more than himself could approve of the measure. He even went farther, and approved of that expedition which placed the

Dutch fleet in our hands; but here he thought our endeavours should have ended. He observed, to impose any government on a country was wrong; as it was difficult to say, often times, what was or what was not a lawful government. Till, therefore, he was informed in what way this additional force was to be disposed of, he should be a decided enemy to the bill.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, he was sorry the honourable gentleman who spoke last should have any difficulty in conceiving what was or what was not the lawful Government of Holland. He was surprised that such a term, recognized in every treaty between Holland and Great Britain, should stand under the imputation of any ambiguity. It was that Government, which by national honour and interest we were equally bound and guaranteed to support, and he should never look for any other term whereby to express his meaning.

Mr. WESTERN said, he felt himself bound by duty and honour to declare his sentiments on the present occasion, because they were perfectly adverse to those great and important measures which Ministers were now pursuing. He could not, without some degree of sorrow, see our best and most constitutional defence, the Militia, thus dwindling into nothing; and this not for the security of His Majesty's dominions, but for schemes, he feared, of foreign and doubtful conquest. Differing, therefore, as he did from Ministers in many of their sentiments, and believing the reduction itself of the Militia to be a bad measure, he could never vote for any force drawn from that Militia to be placed at the disposal of Ministers. If any standing force was necessary in this country, it should be, in his opinion, the Militia; but the time seemed to be approaching when we should look for that in vain.

Mr. Western observed, that no wish to rise in his place, out of vanity of debate, had led him to deliver any sentiment at all on the present business. He saw, he said, the management of affairs in hands which on former occasions had displayed no great skill in the controul of our national force. He alluded, he said, to their unfortunate attempts on Toulon, Dunkirk, and Quiberon. He, therefore, and the country with him, he thought, had very little reason to be satisfied with the prospect of enlarged power placed in such hands.

Mr. SPEAKER then read the motion; when,

Mr. MARTIN rose, and said, it was his fortune to differ sometimes with Ministers, and it was the case at this present time. He said we were engaged, he feared, in a ruinous war; and under that impression it would ill become him to give any sanction to measures,

meant to facilitate its operations. The advantages to be derived from continental wars, he always thought doubtful, and never a counterpoise to the risk, the blood, and the treasure, undertaken and expended in their prosecution. These notions, he said, were consonant with those which every sensible man must adopt, who would examine the history of our continental wars. To send troops to the continent from this island was attended with far greater expence to our government, than simply marching troops to the places of their destination was to the continental powers; and this he thought sufficiently pointed out what in general should be our line of conduct. (Mr. Martin here read two extracts, which tended to discredit wars of aggrandisement and ambition.) He concluded with observing, that we were drawn in artfully by degrees to support measures, which, explained at once in a full and fair manner, would not meet the approbation of those who supported them: and the best argument for such measures had often been found to be, that we had proceeded too far in them to recede; and this, he thought, might be applied to our present situation.

The bill was then read and passed. Mr. Secretary Dundas carried it up to the Lords.

The House formed itself into a Committee, to take into consideration the report of a former Committee, on the petition of the Liverpool and Lancaster merchants. Mr. Pierrepont in the Chair.

Colonel GASCOYNE said, that having opened this business, it was necessary for him to trouble the House with some farther remarks; and he would wish, in particular, to do justice to the candour of Mr. Pitt, who, on the first mention of the application to Parliament for assistance on the part of the merchants, shewed himself at first hostile to the measure; but afterwards, on a farther investigation of the business, was not ashamed to change his opinion. The strong circumstances which had thus rendered the opinion of the right honourable gentleman mutable, would, he trusted, operate in like manner on all those who at first felt any objection to this parliamentary relief; and for this reason he did not think much argument on his part was necessary. Mr. Pitt, he said, had taken care to procure the best information on the subject, the result of which, he doubted not, would be favourable to the wishes of the petitioners: and it ought to be considered, that this information is received from persons of undoubted consequence and veracity. This he mentioned to obviate any objections which might arise, from the parties giving information, being supposed so to do from selfish and interested motives. That the consequences of this relief would not

only be beneficial to private individuals, but to the country at large, he trusted was sufficiently proved. A few more words on this subject, however, he thought might be necessary. At this time there were 57,000 hogheads of sugar in the port of Liverpool, the duties on which, all but 7,000, were at this moment, owing to the embarrassment of the merchants, left unpaid. These duties, at the rate of twenty shillings per hundred, might be easily calculated, and he believed it would amount to near 600,000*l.* The charges of freight and insurance came to 900,000*l.* To answer all these demands, the petitioners requested only the aid of half a million, that is, 400,000*l.* for Liverpool, and 100,000*l.* for Lancaster. Under these circumstances, he supposed there could be no opposition to the bill; and he would move, therefore, that it is the opinion of this Committee that the aid required should be given; but before he sat down he would make one more remark, that the property given to the public, in security for this half million, would treble that amount.

The question was then called for; when

Mr. TIERNEY was surprised that half a million of the public money was thus expected to be granted away as a matter of course. The evidence that had been given the House on this subject was very inadequate to the importance of the thing required. Only two gentlemen had been examined, and even these had a very deep interest in the success of the present application. On this inconsiderable and interested evidence, however, Members were called upon to vote away the money of their constituents. The security given to the public for the re-payment of this money, he contended, was insufficient; because it consisted of an article not of certain permanent worth, or always saleable. He doubted, also, whether the bonds given as additional security were to be depended upon; and he saw nothing but difficulties and embarrassments which were likely to attend the adoption of this mode of relief. Mr. Tierney then asked, if it was reasonable in that House, on the evidence of two interested individuals, thus to put to the least hazard any part of the public money? Before such a determination was made, farther inquiry was necessary, he said, or the House would submit itself to the charge of haste and presumption in its decision. His duty to the public led him to oppose every measure which had not for its object the public good. The grant to the merchants in 1793 was far from being a parallel case with the present, because the distress was then a public one; it was felt in every town and city in the kingdom; and called therefore for public redress; this, however, is only partial, confined to two or three places, and to one description of persons. It was decent and proper, at any rate, that

that farther investigation should be made into the subject, before the House came to any resolution; causes, for which the House might afterwards find itself not justified in its present proceeding, perhaps, he said, might thus come to light. It was notorious that there had been much speculation in the sugar trade; for while the foreign market was amply supplied with that article, the market at home suffered, and the public were made to pay the advanced price of scarcity; and now that the export market is short, and the public might reasonably expect a great and cheap supply, the sales are impeded by the merchants, on account of the diminished price of the article. Could the price fortunately be raised, we might then expect to meet with a sufficient supply, and not before. Here, therefore, appears to be a speculation, which this House, by granting any relief, will seem to countenance. This embarrassment of the merchants seemed to rise from a spirit of extensive speculation, which, instead of being encouraged by that House, called rather for their restraining interference. Mr. Tierney therefore warned the House not to take the year 1793 for a precedent on the present occasion, since there was just as much difference between the circumstances of the times, as between a whole and an individual. Should the present bill pass, he made no doubt but other mercantile bodies would apply to that House on every temporary pressure in their affairs; and thus the House would create to itself an infinite deal of trouble, while the public would be answerable for every risk and expence thus incurred. Mr. Tierney again wished to impress upon the House the idea of the perfect dissimilarity between the present application to Parliament, and that made by the united voice of the public in the year 1793. At that period no particular individual was benefited; all shared in the advantage, and all in the risk. Public credit at that time was at stake, and bankruptcy was staring every man in the face. The interposition, therefore, of Parliament was then the work of imperious necessity, which cannot be asserted as a plea on the present occasion. It was to be considered also, that this practice of giving relief to trading bodies must leave in the hands of those who had most power in that House much influence; and for this reason also he was an enemy to the bill. He could wish, he said, to give every reasonable protection and relief to trade; but in the present mode he would not, since he had other duties to perform to the public paramount to all private considerations; and on this account, therefore, he would vote against the bill.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that the honourable gentleman who had last spoken, made use of the expression "voted away" in

rather an improper and presumptuous sense ; and, what was stranger still, would not allow that merchandize and bonds to treble the amount of the sum required for relief, would be a safe security for the public. But where there was such security, he made no doubt the generality of the Members of that House would differ from the honourable gentleman respecting what line of conduct ought to be followed. For his part, he could not suppose any one, who had taken even a slight view of the subject, but would be able to satisfy his mind both with respect to the safety and expediency of the present measure ; and acting and voting under such conviction, could not be called granting this relief as a matter of course, or voting away the public money. He said, he was not averse to the honourable gentleman's objection to the mixing of public and private concerns together. This was what he himself did not approve. But in the present instance, here was a temporary embarrassment, brought on by no improper speculation, but rather by circumstances which may hereafter tend to the benefit of the country at large. On this latter account, the bill could not be said to be entirely of a private nature ; but private advantage and public utility both united together to recommend it to the adoption of the House. On examination, no undue spirit of adventure, no improper conduct appeared in the merchants, and he did believe the House might give its assistance without running any material risk. Mr. Pitt did not wish that the measure now before the House should be made a precedent for future applications to Parliament, except on occasions which could plead circumstances and situations like the present. He, therefore, thought that any argument drawn from such a supposition was no practicable objection to the present bill. He was not a friend to farther evidence on the business, as he thought what had already been given was quite sufficient, and the relief wanted was immediate ; he thought it best, therefore, to refer it at once to a Committee to prepare the bill. If the honourable gentleman who spoke last would consider the amount of the last year's crops, he would find partly a solution to the question of what occasioned the present embarrassment of the merchants. Their embarrassments, he said, were in proportion to the enormous and unexpected produce of the crops. The failures at Hamburgh might also be mentioned among their other causes ; and at the same time it was to be considered, that the interest of the public was at variance with that of the merchant. The public would wish to purchase at the lowest price ; and now that there was a great stock of sugars on hand, the merchant was compelled to yield to the wishes of the purchaser. But it must be allowed that every article of sale, however it may be

the interest of the purchaser that it should be cheap, ought to leave in the hands of the seller a reasonable profit; this, according to the price at which sugars were now brought to market, he understood and believed could not be the case. Sugars had fallen lately from eighty shillings to sixty shillings the hundred weight; and even now, at this latter price, were scarcely saleable; to be compelled to sell them lower would be altogether ruinous. Mr. Pitt concluded by saying, the Lords of the Treasury had sent to Liverpool for a statement of the precise amount of sugar, now in the hands of the merchants; and there did appear sufficient reason why they should apply to Parliament for aid; and when that aid should be granted, there was every reason to believe, from the security that would be given, that a speedy reimbursement to the public would take place.

Mr. BRYAN EDWARDS said, that having some commercial knowledge, and having collected also some facts, he should speak from that knowledge, and those facts. The planters and merchants, he observed, were quite distinct. The merchants in general sold on commission, and were not therefore so much interested in the price of sugar as the planter. The recent gains, therefore, from the high price of sugars, came eventually to the planter. With few profits, therefore, the merchant is called to bear all the inconvenience of the fluctuations of the market. With regard to the security proposed to be given, Mr. Edwards contended that it was safe and ample. By the custom-house books it appeared that there were 50,000 hogheads of sugar now laying in Liverpool, and the assignment of this alone would constitute double the value of the sum requested from Parliament; and the present emergency was one which perhaps might never happen again. The importations of sugars into England had been greater this year than ever they had been before. To the single port of London were brought 170,277 hogheads, which is double the quantity of what was ever known before. The duties on these sugars, at twenty shillings the hundred, amounted to two millions and a half. Gentlemen, he supposed, were acquainted with the circumstance of merchants receiving bills from persons residing in the colonies; these they were obliged to pay, and their amount was regulated by the deposit of sugars and rum placed in their hands. Their hardship at present, therefore, must be very great; since the demands upon them were exorbitant, and the means by which they should be satisfied are entirely rendered useless. Much, he said, had been remarked concerning the speculations of the planters and merchants; but he contended they had a right to send their goods to what foreign market they chose. England, he said, for many reasons, had been lately the chief depot

of West-India produce ; and instead of shrinking from the temporary inconveniences which this commercial ascendancy created, we ought to meet them with pleasure, and think them, rather than otherwise, a matter of exultation. The arrival of sugars from St. Domingo and several other islands, which used to send their produce to France, was certainly a matter of no small moment to this country. All the assistance wanted to enable merchants to cope with this influx of trade, and to bring the sugars to market, was so trifling, when compared to the great advantages which would result to the nation at large, he was surprised to think that any serious objection could be formed against it. The honourable gentleman observed, that such was the distress of the West-India merchants in London, that if relief was not granted to them, nineteen out of twenty of them must stop payment. He next alluded to the distresses of the planters of St. Vincent's and Jamaica, stating the losses the former had sustained by the ravages of war, and the latter by the depredations of the Maroons. He said, if the House for a moment considered the smallness of the sum required upon the present occasion, there could not possibly be any objection to it ; it was a sum which would at the present moment materially serve the merchants, and could not be attended with the least risk to the public.

Mr. MANNING said, he was extremely sorry to hear the last honourable gentleman say, that unless relief was afforded to the West-India merchants, nineteen out of twenty would stop payment. He was sure that was not the situation of the London merchants ; and was also persuaded that without parliamentary assistance they would be enabled from their own resources to go on with their trade in the usual course. That a stagnation had taken place with respect to the West-India trade was certainly true : but it was not owing to any speculation of the merchants ; it was owing to the alteration introduced last year respecting the drawback on exports, which cut us out of the supply of the foreign market, and the idea held forth that this country would be able to secure a monopoly of the trade, which put the merchants of Hamburgh on their guard, and induced them to speculate for the purpose of underselling this country. The consequence of this was, that the merchants of this country sent their commodities to Hamburgh ; but the trade, while the drawback continued, could not last, and in fact they never sent more than one-third of the importation of sugar. He stated, that the merchants of London did not require the interposition of this House farther than to advise how the abundant crop of last year could be best brought to market, at a saving price to the growers. He said there were various ways to effect this, such as equalizing the duties on corn, and

by adopting certain regulations with respect to molasses. He however was convinced no such application as had been alluded to would be made by the London merchants, but that their trade would return to its usual course. As to the application by the merchants of Liverpool and Lancaster, he was so far from objecting to it, that he thought they had the strongest claims to the assistance of Parliament, as they exported on their own account, and the aid they required was to enable them to make good their payments to the manufacturers of this country. He concluded, by observing, that no such reason could exist on the part of the merchants of London.

Mr. BRYAN EDWARDS said, if the merchants of London received the assistance of the Bank of England, it was the same as if they received it from Parliament.

Mr. MANNING spoke in explanation.

Colonel GASCOYNE observed, that it was impossible for the merchants of Liverpool and Lancaster to have the advantage of a mode of relief similar to that which the London merchants might obtain from the Bank of England.

Mr. DENT said a few words in favour of the motion.

Mr. YORKE observed, that the assistance offered to the planters of Grenada and St. Vincent's had no connection with the present question. He thought that encouraging the applications of merchants to Parliament for aid might be injurious, by inducing them to give way to speculations, under an idea that, if unsuccessful, they would obtain relief.

Mr. NICHOLLS said, there certainly were many objections to the public's interfering with the mercantile concerns of individuals, yet in the present instance there were many reasons to be urged, which proved they had a just claim on the assistance of Parliament. Their distresses had arisen from a measure adopted by this House, namely, taking off the drawback on exports last year.

Mr. Chancellor PITT did not admit that taking off the drawback had produced the effect stated by the last honourable gentleman, or that it was owing to that circumstance Hamburgh was so overstocked; but he said the situation of the trade would induce him to try whether giving the drawback for a limited time, while the price of sugar was at a certain rate, would not have the effect of opening the port of Hamburgh. He said he held in his hand a motion for giving the drawback while sugar was at a certain price. As to the merchants of London, there was a particular species of relief, which they could apply for; but there was one species of relief open to all the merchants, that was, that the extent of the imports this year

had been such as to make the duty which had been already received for a proportion of them, more than the whole amount of the duties for any former year. He therefore trusted the House would see the reasonableness of the proposition he had to offer; it was that the public having received as much from the duties on imports as had ever been received for any whole year, the payment of the remainder of the duties should be suspended, and the bonds of the merchants taken as securities for their future payment.

Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY said, it did not follow that taking off the drawback was the cause of the present difficulties. He approved of the relief proposed to be granted. He was glad the subject had been taken up in a manner calculated not only to relieve individuals, but be of advantage to the public. He said, the bankruptcies of individual merchants affected the credit of the whole kingdom.

The question was then put, "That the sum of half a million should be granted for the accommodation of such of the merchants of Liverpool and Lancaster as should be desirous of receiving such assistance, upon their giving security to repay the same within a time to be limited." The Committee agreed to it, and the report was ordered to be received on the following day.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that the House should to-morrow resolve into a Committee to consider of the duties on spirits made from molasses or sugar.

The House, on the motion of Mr. Chancellor Pitt, went into a Committee to consider of the drawbacks payable on sugar exported, and of the expediency of permitting sugars imported from the West Indies to be warehoused. He moved two resolutions; one for taking off the drawbacks on sugars exported, and the other for permitting sugars from the West Indies to be warehoused; both of which were agreed to, and the report was ordered to be received the next day.

The House went into a Committee on the acts of the 38th and 39th of his present Majesty, to consider of the appropriation of the duties thereby granted. A resolution was passed, that so much of the former as related to the duties on goods exported and imported, and of the latter, as related to the duties on income, should be amended. The report was ordered to be received on the following day.

Thursday, October 3.

Honourable Mr. PIERREPONT brought up the Report of the Committee upon the petition of the Merchants of Liverpool and Lancaster, praying for the temporary Loan of 500,000*l.* upon giving security for re-payment thereof. The resolution of the Committee for granting the prayer of the petition was read and agreed to, and a bill ordered to be brought in upon the said resolution.

The House, upon the motion of Mr. Chancellor Pitt, resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the duties on spirits made from molasses. Mr. Chancellor Pitt, in order, as he stated, to equalize the duties on molasses with those on barley, moved, "That the sum of four-pence three farthings, part of the duties payable on every gallon of fermented wash brewed from molasses, should cease and determine." The resolution was agreed to in the Committee, and the report ordered to be received the next day.

Mr. BRAGGE brought up the Report of the Committee on the duties payable on sugars imported and exported. The resolution, "That the drawback, withheld by an act of last year, upon sugars exported, should be granted when the price was below a certain sum," was ordered to be postponed.

The resolution for allowing sugars imported from the West Indies to be warehoused, was agreed to.

The House then resolved into a Committee, to consider of the first resolution, which had been postponed.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, a drawback upon sugars exported had been withheld by an act of the 36th, as well as the 38th of his present Majesty; it was therefore his intention that the drawbacks withheld by each of those acts should be granted, while the price was under a certain rate. He moved a resolution accordingly, which the Committee adopted.

The House resumed; the Report was received and agreed to, a bill ordered to be brought in, and an instruction moved, that the Members appointed to prepare the bill should make provision pursuant to the said resolution.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS rose, and said, Sir, it is my intention to lay before the House a motion, upon which I do not think it necessary to say many words, the bare mention of it being all that is necessary to insure its approbation. I am persuaded I am not singular as to the feelings I entertain in consequence of the lamented death of the late Lord Howe. There can be but one unanimous

sentiment pervading the country as to the propriety of not suffering that noble Lord to go out of the world without publicly testifying the regard due to his memory. On various occasions His Majesty, with the concurrence of this House, has shewn his regard for eminent services of individuals; and whenever His Majesty has thought proper to distinguish any one by conferring exalted honour on him for the services rendered the country, this House has never failed to interpose, and second the intentions of His Majesty, by conferring a substantial and honourable pecuniary reward. In the present case, however, no consideration of that kind has occurred; the noble Lord by his own merit was advanced to a seat in the other House, and from the situation of his family there was no occasion to remunerate him in a pecuniary point of view. There, therefore, remains only one way by which this House can manifest its sense of his services, and that is, by the erection of a monument to his memory. To his respectable family it will afford a considerable degree of consolation for the loss they have sustained by being thus deprived of their head, to find that his merits have not been forgotten by his country. To the public it is of importance to keep alive the remembrance of the brilliant services performed by great and eminent characters. To every generous mind it is of importance that such services should be distinguished, as there is nothing that can more stimulate to the performance of brilliant actions than the certainty of having them recorded to posterity. On these grounds, without any farther observations, I shall move, "That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, praying, that His Majesty will be graciously pleased to give directions for the erection of a monument, in the Cathedral of Saint Paul's, to the memory of Admiral Earl Howe, with an inscription, expressive of the eminent services rendered his country, in the course of his long and laborious life, and particularly by the important service performed by his brilliant and decisive victory over the French fleet, on the 1st of June 1794." Mr. Secretary Dundas added, that he had fixed upon the Cathedral of Saint Paul's, in preference to Westminster Abbey, in order that, by the contemplation of his monument, the remembrance of his victory might accompany the remembrance of that solemnity with which the colours taken by him on the first of June were placed in that Cathedral.

The motion was put and carried, *nem. con.* and the address was ordered to be presented by such Members as were of the Privy Council.

A resolution was also moved in the Committee for continuing the corn exportation and importation bill, passed last session.

Mr. Chancellor PITT took the opportunity of observing, that however averse he was to the public mixing its interest with the concerns of individuals, yet he wished to have it understood, that he should depend upon the exertions of individuals for the importation of corn for the present, and that Government would sanction their speculations; but he also wished to have it understood, that individuals were not to continue their speculations upon the faith of the assistance of Parliament beyond the 30th of September 1800, at which time Government would take the subject into its own hands. With this view he moved the continuance of the act till the above period. The report was ordered to be received the next day.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, October 4.

Lord GRENVILLE rose to make the motion for the discussion of which he had moved that their Lordships be summoned. The task he had undertaken to perform he perfectly felt to be as arduous as it was satisfactory, and he had only to lament his inability to do any thing like justice to the claims of superior merit and unrivalled services, which he had this day to recommend to the attention of their Lordships, and to the gratitude of the nation at large. In his endeavours to discharge the duty he had imposed upon himself, he would begin by tracing the origin and progress, and marking the event of a war which had been embarked in after repeated and anxious attempts at amicable negotiation had proved unavailing, and which terminated in the total annihilation of a power that had perfidiously planned every measure of mischief and hostility against the British interests in India, of which it had meditated the extinction, by combining with our most powerful and inveterate foe to effect our total expulsion from that country. It was also his task (a task which he had undertaken with peculiar delight), to call their Lordships attention to the merits of those by whose vigilance these menaced mischiefs were averted, and by whose courage and energy the most glorious triumphs were achieved. He was thoroughly sensible how inadequate he was to the performance of such a task, and how short every the most forcible expression must fall of the public merits and services which distinguished the names and exertions of those to whom he intended to move the thanks of their Lordships. Nor

did he imagine that the great degree of intimacy and friendship in which, without the least interruption, he passed his life with the present Governor General of Bengal, could in the least tend to weaken the faint tribute of praise which he was anxious to pay to his very signal deserts. In attempting the panegyric of that distinguished noble Lord, he obeyed the call of his public duty, and of the gratitude of the public, full as much as any private propensity; and, instead of any danger that his private friendship might prompt him to think like exaggerated praise, he was conscious, on the contrary, that the highest strain of eulogy in which he could indulge would but very inadequately represent the talents and virtues which he had so long loved and admired. They happily, however, loudly spoke for themselves, and evinced themselves in actions, the result of which has proved so glorious and so serviceable to the country. A detail of these actions might be deemed necessary to shew the extent and solidity of these services, and the wisdom and honour of those by whom they were performed.

His Lordship then entered into an historical retrospect of the time and manner in which Lord Mornington had undertaken a general and uncontrolled superintendence over the British dominions in India. On his arrival in India, Lord Mornington found the Princes of the country at peace with our India Company; but that peace was not to be of long duration. Their Lordships were well acquainted with the great efforts that had been made by France to fit out the formidable expedition which sailed from Toulon; nor was any man here ignorant of its destination and object—it meditated hostility and destruction to the British empire in India, which France aimed at effecting by gaining over some of the native powers to co-operate in her plans. Tippoo Sultaun was the first and the most eager to go every length to derive advantage from that expedition, and to lend it every assistance in his power. For this purpose he sent an embassy to the Isle of France, not with a view to complain of any grievance, or to solicit any redress, or to prefer any complaint, but to encourage and urge the attempts of the French, and embark himself in the design, for our utter expulsion from our India possessions—such was his perfidious conduct towards those from whom he had so frequently experienced the utmost forbearance, the most unparalleled magnanimity. The motives of this embassy Tippoo did not endeavour to conceal. They were avowedly an attachment to the cause of the French Republic—hatred and hostility to the interests of England. His letters, addressed not only to the Government of the Isle of France, but to the Executive Directory of France, openly invited them to conclude an offen-

five and defensive alliance with him, and offered to subsidize whatever troops France might furnish him with, to enable him to commence hostilities against the British forces, and by their joint efforts and co-operation, to realize the ardent anxiety which he felt of expelling the British nation from India. The first notice which Lord Mornington received of this proposed alliance, was in the month of June, 1798, and coupling it with the information he had likewise received of the naval expedition which sailed from Toulon, he immediately took every measure which prudence could suggest, and activity and decision could enforce. On the 18th of June 1798, the Governor General received an authentic account of the proclamation that had been issued in the Isle of France, and of the design which that proclamation unfolded and was calculated to realize. He then formed the resolution, a resolution evidently springing from wisdom and foresight, not to await, but to anticipate the attack of the enemy. He accordingly dispatched orders to the Governors of Madras and Bombay, to prepare for the event; and so forward were the preparations, that a decisive blow was struck even that year. Great doubts and difficulties, however, arose in assembling the army at Madras, and it was much feared that long before it was in readiness to act, Tippoo's alarms might be excited, which would defeat all the measures which the Governor General was concerting. No situation could be more critical, or more full of perplexing anxiety, than that in which Lord Mornington was then placed—to await the danger with his eyes open to its approach, would be a flagrant neglect of his duty; to attempt to avert it by a sudden and abrupt attack, seemed to the most experienced military men a measure of very doubtful and hazardous issue; such was the trying dilemma in which the Governor General was entangled, and whatever side he was to embrace, he felt that he must incur the whole of the responsibility. The co-operation he was to expect from the native powers in alliance with Great Britain, was either doubtful, or of little advantage. The *Mahrattas* were rendered unable to afford any substantial assistance; nor was their good will to be called in question. The absence of their support arose from real and undissembled inability. From the co-operation of the Nizam, little or nothing could be expected; his councils and army were at that period under the influence of a French faction, and two French officers were at the head of the Sepoys in the Nizam's service, and indeed the whole of his military force was at the disposal of the French officers. The aspect of these difficulties created neither dependency or fear in the heart of the Governor General—he, on the contrary, adopted the most spirited and decisive measures; an

armed force was immediately detached into the territories of the Nizam ; the French army was not only surrounded and made prisoners ; but a new treaty was concluded with the Nizam, by which the disposal of his forces were put into the hands of the British, and that very army which had been raised and destined to attack them, was immediately turned against the enemy. What could display greater ability than this masterly manœuvre ? but if it was great in ability, how much more useful was it in its consequences, which so powerfully contributed to our subsequent successes, by placing us in a situation to frustrate all the plans, and defeat all the attacks that had been meditated against us. Till that was accomplished, nothing was safe ; but as soon as it was achieved a negotiation was opened. Lord Mornington was not unmindful that it was the best policy to remain contented with our situation in India ; to offend no power by our encroachments, or give umbrage to them by any plan of ambition or aggrandizement ; but faithfully and punctually to observe the faith of existing treaties. Such, indeed, was the nature and tendency of the orders under which, as Governor General he was bound to act. He had, however, ample justification for pursuing an opposite plan : for what more clear and undisguised hostility could there be than that which he experienced from those who would negotiate with our worst enemy for our ruin, and enter into offensive alliance with him for our destruction ; who stood forward in military array against our troops ; and who assumed, if not the measures of actual hostility, at the least the attitude of hostile preparation and menace ; who proposed to France that if she would succour them with a military force from Europe, they would favour their landing at Porto-novo ; they would lead them into the heart of the Dutch territories, into which they were ready to penetrate themselves, and co-operate with the French arms, in expelling us from every foot of ground, and every trace of our dominion in India ? Nor was it against the British establishments alone that they concerted this hostile attack, but also against those of Portugal, on account of her alliance with Great Britain. In the storming of that capital, where these machinations were hatched against us, and in the fall of that power who acted such a perfidious part against us, not only therefore great military skill and talent have been exerted and displayed, but the most consummate wisdom and firmness, and the most sober justice had been evinced. With this crafty and perfidious power Lord Mornington had, however, proposed to open a negotiation, even when Tippoo was doing all the evil and mischief in his power, without uttering one word of grievance or complaint. Notwithstanding his flagrant violations of all faith towards the English Go-

vernment, Lord Mornington still repeated and renewed his offers to remove every cause of difference and disaffection, if any really existed. The whole of these patient and pacific offers were received either with sullen silence or studied duplicity, and at last with open preparations of hostile aggression. When Tippoo saw the ruin he was drawing down upon his own head, his inveterate and rancorous animosity suggested to his wicked imagination that he already saw the gigantic plan of the French Republic on the eve of being realized, and that the hour was come for the subversion and downfall of the British dominions in India. He was also anxious to gain time, and defer the measures that were taking against him, in order that the season of the year might intervene, and allow time to receive the succours with which he was to co-operate in our overthrow. But was it not unnecessary, the noble Lord observed, to dwell any longer on these details; or on the wisdom, firmness, and sound policy of the measures adopted by the Governor General, who months after months had made proposals for negotiation to an enemy, who instead of a sincere desire to establish peace, was secretly endeavouring to disable and destroy us? And if after these repeated provocations, and avowed preparations for hostilities, his noble friends had resolved upon offensive operations, it was easy to relieve the Governor General from all responsibility for his conduct—a conduct which, when rightly viewed and appreciated, will be discovered not only to have averted the formidable perils and ruin which hung over our Indian empire, but moreover established it on a basis of more permanent security than it ever before enjoyed. He trusted their Lordships shared with him in the sense he felt of these solid and memorable achievements, and that they would unite with him in expressing the thanks which he had to propose, and which such signal services so justly and to imperiously called for. There was one point more, and that a very striking one, to which he would beg leave to advert, and that was the judicious manner in which the Governor General had proceeded to compose and reconcile all the jarring and discordant opinions which formerly prevailed among the servants of the India Company. In this he succeeded by a wise and temperate use of the sole controlling power with which he was invested; and a greater and more refined satisfaction arose in his breast from observing this salutary effect, when he perceived that this jar and discord of sentiment were silenced, not merely by the interposition of this superior control, but by an appeal to the wisdom and good sense of the different governors. Among them the conduct of Lord Clive, stood peculiarly eminent, and reflected the greatest honour on his heart and head. That noble Lord, spurning all little jealous-

sies and all suggestions of mortified pride when obliged to stoop to superior power, has not only expressed a very decided opinion, in favour of the propriety of the measures pursued by the Governor General, but by his zeal and spirit had principally contributed to promote the views, and secure the benefits which the adoption of these measures had in contemplation. The same spirit guided the conduct, and animated the exertions of the Governor of Bombay, Mr. Duncan, who equally concurred in forwarding the ends of the Earl of Mornington, and in securing the support of the English Government and establishments. In consequence of these wise, spirited, and well-concerted measures, when the army was put in motion, it evidently appeared to be composed of troops the best disciplined and appointed of any that was ever collected in India. The event, indeed best shews the zeal and spirit, the courage and intrepidity with which it glowed, and by which all its movements were directed. It was not his intention to attempt detailing its different operations, or the successes with which they were crowned. He could not, however, forbear mentioning the gallant action of the 6th of March, when a small division of the British army attacked and defeated a powerful and numerous force of the enemy, and by that victory laid the ground of the subsequent successful actions which were closed by that final and brilliant event which was brought about by an army composed almost entirely of Europeans, who, during the intense heat of the day, attacked and took by assault, one of the strongest fortresses that exists, and in the space of two hours made themselves masters of the capital of the most implacable and perfidious foe, whom the British interests had to dread in India. These were achievements which baffled all description, and soared above all praise; he would not, therefore, attempt a word more in their commendation. He trusted that the House was convinced of the merits of the Governor General, and of those who acted under him on this glorious occasion, as he was; and he therefore did not doubt of their most cordial concurrence in the vote which he would have the honour to propose. Whatever he might have omitted to throw light upon the operations he had been describing, would be found in the papers on their Lordships' table, which, they would observe, were written with the same spirit and ability with which were accomplished the glorious events they so forcibly record. His Lordship then concluded by moving, That the thanks of this House be given to the Right Honourable the Earl of Mornington, for the wisdom, spirit and ability, with which he had discharged his duty since he entered on the Government of India, and the uniform moderation and vigilance which he opposed

to the projects of the French and their allies in India, which prepared the way for that brilliant event which produced the overthrow of our most perfidious foe, and established on a basis of the most permanent security the whole of the British dominions in India. The question was put on the motion, and agreed to *nemine dissentiente*.

Lord GRENVILLE next proceeded to pronounce a panegyric on Lord Clive, who, as Governor of Fort St. George, deserved to have his conduct sanctioned by the thanks of that House, for the nice honour by which it was directed, and the useful example it held out of due subordination, which so powerfully contributes to unanimity and concord among those who govern, and which so materially promotes the public service of the country, and which in this instance was so eminently displayed. The motion of thanks to Lord Clive was also agreed to *nem. diff.*

He then made a similar motion in favour of Mr. Duncan, whose services are so pointedly acknowledged by the Governor General, in having so rapidly put in motion the army of Bombay, by which he materially contributed to the successful termination of the war in India.

Lord GRENVILLE next followed with a motion of thanks to Lieutenant General George Harris, Commander in Chief of the Army, whose merits were also strongly acknowledged by the Governor General, and which were powerfully displayed in the storming of Seringapatam.

The next motion of thanks was to the general officers, to whose ability and exertions so much was owing of the success that accompanied the storming of Tippoo's capital. Among those his Lordship distinguished three by name: Lieutenant General Stuart, who commanded the army of Bombay, and under whose auspices the memorable action of the 6th of March was fought and won; Major Hartley, and General Baird.

Lord Grenville then moved, That the House do acknowledge and approve the conduct and service of the troops employed in the war in India.

His Lordship finally concluded by moving, That the Lord Chancellor do convey these motions of thanks in a letter to the Governor General, that by him they may be communicated to the different persons to whom they have been bestowed.

All these motions were agreed to *nem. diff.*

Lord Grenville then moved the second reading of the Militia Reduction Bill.

Earl FITZWILLIAM said, that when the bill was brought into Parliament last year to enable Government to accept the voluntary services of a certain number of the Militia, he had foreseen that what was then grounded upon a particular emergency, would be on every occasion resorted to as a general principle. He felt therefore the same objections to the measure which had induced him to oppose it last year, and these objections were strengthened by the very extension proposed. The first objection which struck his mind was, that the plan was a virtual breach of the engagement which subsisted with men raised for a particular purpose, under a particular system. Such was the case of the Militia, and when the nature of the service was changed, Government did that which those who had entered into the Militia had never anticipated. It was to be considered too that the burden in raising the Militia was not equally distributed over the community; it fell chiefly on the owners and occupiers of land. The raising of the Militia too, it would be found on examination, had been a considerable burden upon the poor rates: to the poor rates, however, those who had fixed an ostensible property chiefly contributed. The landholders indeed had a superior interest in defending their property; because it could not be transferred like other kinds of property to other countries; for this reason the landed interest might acquiesce in the burden, which a body of men calculated for the defence of the country might occasion. They had reason to complain, however, when they found that corps which had been raised and maintained at a great expence for their defence, diverted to other purposes; it was an act of injustice to the landed proprietors, as it destroyed that system under which they had engaged to contribute their personal service, or pecuniary aid.

This, however, was not the only ground on which he was unfavourable to the measure. It was objectionable not only as being unjust in its nature, but as introducing into the Militia a degree of insubordination that was of the most perilous example. Every person must have heard of the scenes of riot and disorder which took place on the recruiting from the Militia forces. All sorts of mutinies were engendered by it. The officers were placed in the most mortifying and painful situation. Such was the state of insubordination, that officers were obliged to confine themselves to their barracks or their tents, and durst not face the soldiers, or appear on the parades; such was the overthrow of discipline which had resulted from the measure. Upon the whole he saw so many inconveniences attending the mode of proceeding, that he was obliged to give it his negative.

Lord HOLLAND said, the avowed object of the bill now before their Lordships was, to reduce the number of the Militia in order to obtain a disposable force. He trusted that it would not be necessary for him to demonstrate what must be so obvious to every noble Lord, that no man could give his vote for the measure, unless he could likewise give his sanction to the manner in which the force was to be applied. It was necessary no less to approve of the final object than of the means which they were called upon to furnish for attaining it. This was evident from the terms of the preamble, which stated the employment of the Militia recruits in the expedition to Holland to have been of the utmost advantage, and, as affording an argument in favour of the disposition made by the bill on the table. Thus the approbation of the object of the expedition was connected with the concurrence in the proposal for augmenting the disposable force of the country. Upon both points he should take the liberty of offering a few observations.

As to the mode which was proposed, their Lordships had heard, from different Members of the House, well qualified to give information on the subject, that it was considered as a breach of engagement between Government and the Militia establishment—that it was odious and disagreeable to the Militia officers: in fact, it was considered as an insult both to their spirit and to their rank—two things, which, in military men ought to be held most sacred. Upon these topics their Lordships had at different times heard a great deal. They had heard but little, however, on the other branch of the subject, and that was the object in which the additional force was to be employed. In stating his sentiments he hoped he should be excused, if he differed from the majority of their Lordships. He was conscious that he was exposed to clamour and misrepresentation; he was aware that of late years a cant had been introduced into both Houses of Parliament, which tended to render the exercise of one of the great duties of a Lord of Parliament obnoxious—it was said that, to arraign the object or conduct of an expedition pending its success, was factious, unseasonable, and hostile to the interests of the public. Conscious of the rectitude of his intentions, however, he little regarded these imputations. He was ready to admit that, in the course of the execution of an enterprise, some degree of mischief might arise from the public discussion of the advantages or disadvantages of its object, the wisdom or folly of its contrivance. This, however, was but one view of the question; and these evils were infinitely compensated by the immense benefits which must arise from free inquiry and from public discussion. The inconveniences were to be found only in a contracted view—the advantages of de-

bate and examination were to be discovered upon a great scale, and as peculiarly connected with the principles of freedom and the genius of the Constitution.

He should therefore proceed to examine freely the object of the expedition which it was the purpose of the new disposable force to prosecute. He should consider whether or not the object at which Ministers aimed was, in the circumstances of this country and of Europe, prudent to be attempted or safe to be pursued. He was most willing to acknowledge that happy would it be for the United States to be again placed under their old Government; he was ready to pay that tribute to the Government which had been overthrown by the usurpation of France:—The restoration of that Government was the avowed object of Administration. He could not but remark, however, that the sentiments of the noble Secretary of State, respecting the former Government of the United States, had undergone a great change: on a former occasion [*probably the Debates on the Irish Union*] the noble Secretary had thought proper to represent that Government which it was now the object of his exertions to restore, as the *ne plus ultra* of debility, incapable of self-defence, incapable of energy. Arguments and principles, however, the noble Secretary made subservient to circumstances, and what was reprobated as incurably defective at one moment was to be re-established by every effort of military power at another. He confessed, indeed, that if this country was bound more closely by the ties of justice and gratitude to one Government than another, we were bound to use every rational means, consistent with policy and duty to ourselves, in favour of the Prince of Orange. That family had many claims upon us. From a steady attachment to our interests, that estimable Prince had forfeited the regard of his countrymen and the high dignities with which he was invested; and if it was consistent with the immutable rules of justice, we were bound to espouse his cause. But there was something more to be considered than what our gratitude to him might dictate. We ought to inquire what were the sentiments of the people of Holland, because unless they cordially sympathised with our feelings and co-operated with our efforts, it would be the extreme of injustice and absurdity to attempt the restoration of the Stadtholder's power. He was afraid, however, that the very conduct which had laid the foundation of the Stadtholder's claims to our assistance had tended to alienate from him the confidence of his countrymen. He was afraid that the dispositions of the inhabitants were not likely to induce them to look with sanguine hope to our aid, or to combine cordially to assist our undertakings. True, indeed, there was little opportunity to judge from the even's

of the expedition what their sentiments were ; but he doubted they were not very well disposed to welcome our efforts for the restoration of the former order of things.

It was proper, therefore, to consider, whether, from the circumstances under which this expedition to their country was undertaken, and the parties who were engaged in it, the Dutch were likely to join cordially with our efforts? True, indeed, we had gone over to offer them our assistance, and with fine words in our mouths. We held out the captivating ideas of protection and deliverance. We announced that it was our object to rescue them from the galling, and degrading, and ruinous yoke under which they groaned. From the nature of mankind, whom the pressure of an active and grinding tyranny must ever revolt, it was reasonable to infer that the Dutch must ardently wish to be delivered from the oppressors under whom they had fallen. No doubt then the Dutch must curse and detest the usurpation of the French, and languish for independence. This was but a part of the case. It did not follow that they would rise at once to assist as their deliverers those who were the enemies of their oppressors. It did not follow, because they abhorred French tyranny, that they would immediately coincide with the views of Great Britain and Russia. They must know equally from experience and from observation, what is the meaning of protection and relief which the weak receive from the powerful. Twice within the last fifteen years they had felt what it was to be delivered and protected by powerful neighbours. They must have seen too around them, that for a small state to be relieved and protected by a great one, was in fact to be conquered and plundered. Must they not have seen what was the protection of the Netherlands, of Poland, of Venice, of Switzerland, and could they help entertaining some suspicions, even of the most flattering protestations of disinterested kindness which could be held out to themselves? But it might be said, how is it possible to entertain a jealousy of the offers of assistance and protection coming from the magnanimity of the Emperor of Russia, and the generosity of the British nation? The proclamation we had issued to the Dutch people breathed nothing but liberal and friendly aid; but was there any thing to encourage them to repose an unlimited confidence in our professions, and induce them to lend an active co-operation in our cause? Was there a word in these proclamations concerning the restoration of the Cape or of Ceylon? Was there any assurance that what we had taken from them in the course of hostilities would not be retained when we should be connected with them as allies? Can they in fact depend upon restoration, from our friendship, of

those possessions, which we have taken as their enemies? If they look at the negotiations at Paris, would they not see that we had resolved to retain the settlements which had fallen into our hands? Must they not know that it had been said in another place by a right honourable gentleman, high in office, that he trusted the Cape of Good Hope would never return under the dominion of its lawful Government? Comparing all these things with our disinterested professions, what would they think of our protection and relief? Would they infer our generosity from our readiness to reduce the Militia, to procure troops to fight their battles in Holland, while we gave no reason to expect that we would put them in possession of those colonies which they deemed essential to their commerce and to their prosperity?

There was another consideration which, in judging of the wisdom of the expedition, it was necessary not to overlook. We ought to inquire whether the object which we now so doubtfully pursue by arms, might not have been attained by negotiation? Was it not possible that, from its having been attempted by co-operation in the present situation of Europe, that very circumstance might not contribute to prevent its attainment? There was great reason to believe that the King of Prussia must be desirous to see the Government of the Stadtholder restored; and perhaps France, upon certain considerations, might not have been unwilling to acquiesce in such a change. To attempt it by force, however, and with the assistance of Russia so actively interposed, might risk the total failure of the expedition, and the disappointment of our hopes. We ought to have recollected a maxim which had been well expressed by Mr. Burke on another occasion, that if negotiation failed, an appeal might be made to arms, but if force proved ineffectual, it was impossible to resort with success to negotiation. If we failed, therefore, we had no expedient left—baffled force left no room for amicable arrangement.

There was another question which the propriety of the measure involved. Supposing it right that the restoration of the old Government of the United States should be attempted by the force of arms, it remained to be considered whether it was most eligible to employ our own forces or those of our allies, in carrying into effect the enterprise? He was aware that, to rely upon our own forces, was attended with many advantages, but still they might be counterbalanced by the sacrifices which they demanded. If, in the accomplishment of the object by our means, we were obliged to strain every nerve; if we were even compelled to do that which many considered a breach of engagement with the Militia, the question

might admit of considerable doubt. To depend solely upon our allies, certainly was attended with inconveniences. But when the enormous expence of the maintenance of a large army abroad was considered; when it was recollected that the employment of so many vessels in transport service had already produced an uncommon scarcity of coals in the metropolis; when the price of grain was rising to so unusual a height, and which the demand for vessels by Government would probably continue, the policy of our foreign considerations would appear extremely doubtful. There were other expeditions which strongly deterred us from sending so great a part of our force out of the kingdom. The French fleet had returned to Brest in great force. There still was cause for apprehension in Ireland, should foreign aid be joined to domestic discontent. The beautiful specific of an Union held out by Ministers had not yet tranquillized the sister kingdom, and it was not safe to strip the country of the force adequate to effectual defence in case of emergency. But Ministers totally overlooked considerations like these, when their minds were engrossed with other objects. Sometimes they found it convenient to encourage the dread of an invasion; again they thought it factious to suppose invasion possible; but on a fair review of our situation, it was extremely questionable whether the proposed reduction of our defensive force in the country was politic, and the employment of so great an army on a foreign expedition was prudent.

Their Lordships had heard that the measure was not relished by the officers of the Militia, and he thought that it was calculated to disgust gentlemen in that service. The nature of its objects were different from those of a regular army, and the views of those who entered into the former were different from those which ought to influence gentlemen engaging in the latter. Different qualifications were requisite in each. The practice which had been introduced, of sacrificing the Militia to the regular army, however, must tend ultimately to destroy that constitutional system of defence. Some time ago Ministers had increased the Militia upon a threat of invasion. Why did they not then rather increase the disposable force? He suspected, indeed, that, from the very beginning, it was in the contemplation of Ministers to make the Militia subservient to the recruiting of the army. Upon the whole, as he neither approved the object which was to be pursued, nor the means proposed to carry it into execution, he was compelled to give his negative to the bill.

The Earl of WESTMORLAND said, he had listened with the utmost attention and deference to the arguments which had

been urged against the bill, but he had heard nothing which, in his opinion, ought to induce their Lordships to hesitate in giving it their support. Certainly the principle of the bill was not a novel one. It had already been discussed in a former session, and the arguments in its favour had been amply justified by experience. So convinced was he of the beneficial effects which had resulted from the permission given to increase our disposable force, by accepting the voluntary services of a part of the Militia, that he thought the thanks and gratitude of the country were due to the gentlemen at the head of that department who had had the wisdom to devise, the courage to propose, and the address to carry through, he must say, with deference to the noble Lords near him, with very little opposition, a measure of so much advantage to the public interest; and he considered it to be highly honourable to the officers of the Militia, that they had sacrificed every thing that could be agreeable to their private feelings to the service of their country. In order to obtain a just view of the advantages which had been derived from the Militia Reduction Bill of last Session, we had only to compare what was our situation previous to that period with what it is now. But a short time ago we had been threatened with invasion, and forced to consider the means of our own defence. By the protection of Providence, by the vigour of our allies, and by the spirit of resistance, which the oppression and tyranny of the French had every where excited, the aspect of our affairs had greatly improved, and instead of dreading invasion, we were now in a situation to assail our foe. With an opportunity to strike the blow, we wanted the means. The advantages of acting on the offensive, and the impotence of mere defence, it required little argument to demonstrate. In the one case, we were exposed to injury without the power of retaliation, and in the other we prevent attack by threatening it ourselves. Before the Militia Reduction Bill was adopted, we had not 10,000 disposable troops to protect our colonies in any quarter. Even the defence of Ireland, at a critical moment, was owing to the voluntary services of the Militia and Fencibles. The recruiting service was almost totally at a stand, not from any decay of our prosperity and population, but because so many men were bound up in defensive corps, and because the population of the country was not adequate to support so great a body of men for defence, and at the same time to furnish a disposable army equal to the exigency. Policy required, therefore, that a portion of those who were tied up from the opportunity of effectually serving their country, should be placed in a situation which their own wishes and the public interest pointed out,

It was only necessary to render a part of the defensive force disposable, and the demands of the service were satisfied.

As to the objection, that the principle of the Militia system was violated, he could not see that it had any force. It was difficult to decide what was the Militia principle. There were various kinds of Militia, from a Swiss Militia, to the London Trained Bands. The principle of the Militia of this country surely was not that they should be useless to the State. Their whole conduct disclaimed such a supposition. The Militia who had contributed to save the country in 1793 from the designs of Jacobinism, who last year so cheerfully volunteered their service for the defence of the sister kingdom, could not brook the idea of being useless, when the country could be benefited by their services. It had been said, that in going to Ireland, they had left their homes defenceless. Certainly nothing could be so ill founded as such a supposition. By defending Ireland they rendered their own homes secure from attack. What had been said by the mighty *Hoche*, when he was ordered to invade Ireland? He said, and wisely in relation to the designs of his employers, that from Dublin he would proceed to London. The attack against the one was preparatory to an attack against the other; and by defying the attempts of the enemy in Ireland, England was most effectually protected from hostile invasion.

He could not see that the objection of their being a breach of contract with the counties furnishing the Militia was any better founded; no additional burden was imposed on the counties. Those who extended their services did it voluntarily, nor could he perceive any injury done to those interested in the Militia, by enabling them on a great emergency to render more important services to the public in the regular army than in their former state. But it was said, that men would be deterred from enlisting in the Militia by this mode of proceeding. To him it appeared in a very different light. He conceived it would be a recommendation to the service, for men to find, that when tired of one situation they might place themselves in a different, with the addition of a considerable bounty.

Neither could he think that the officers were placed in a more irksome situation, than if the reduction of the Militia had been to take place by a discharge regulated by lot. The power of the officer in the present case was greater than it would be in the other. As to its being disagreeable to commanding officers, he could see no real grievance in the case. The only thing that could be considered in that light was, that the Colonel of a Militia regiment would now find himself at the head of a smaller body of men than

he did some time ago, and surely this personal consideration could not be balanced for a moment against the substantial interests of the nation.

But it was said too, that this precedent being established, the Executive Government would always have recourse to this mode of recruiting the army. It should be recollected, however, that the sanction of Parliament must previously be obtained, and as the employment of this resource would be regulated by the emergency, so there was no danger of its being abused; and he entertained no doubt, that if a crisis of such magnitude as the present should recur, Parliament would not hesitate to sanction with their approbation, that employment of the national force which most effectually contributed to secure its defence and to promote its interests.

The Earl of CAERNARVON said, he did not mean to trespass long on the time of the House, after the able manner in which the bill had been argued upon in the course of the debate; but some few observations he must take the liberty of submitting to their Lordships' consideration. No man, he said, took greater pleasure than he did in listening to the eloquence of the noble Secretary of State in general; but on the present occasion he could neither compliment him on the wisdom of the measure before the House, nor on the argument with which he had introduced the notion for the second reading of the bill. The noble Secretary of State had himself confessed that the bill of the last year gave the death blow to the Militia, and that the present bill was founded precisely on the same principle, a principle sanctioned by the Legislature of the country. He had read the present bill, and he could by no means discover its connection with the former one; on the contrary, it appeared to him to consist of an unshaped form of words, a mingled mass of phrases, that set up a Militia of shreds and patches, that conveyed no clear idea of a distinct object. He had, his Lordship said, reprobated the principle of all the bills relative to the Militia, from the Augmentation Bill downwards, that tended to depart from the system on which the Old Militia was originally founded, as so many breaches of Parliamentary faith, and violation of the compact solemnly entered into between the Legislature on the one hand and the landholder on the other; he had consequently found it his duty to oppose the bill. But much as he thought it liable to censure, still more reason had he to complain of the extent to which the Executive Government had carried it in practice, an extent far beyond what the words of the bill imported. In the former bill, his Lordship said; there was nothing that could be supposed to extend to the old Militia, which was a constitutional force raised ex-

preſſly for the diſtinct purpoſe of a home defence. On that ground, and that ground only, it was, that country gentlemen poſſeſſed of ample fortunes readily engaged in it; and on that ground it alſo was, that the farmers conſented to undertake to bear the heavy burden of ſupporting the wives and children of thoſe who were ballotted for, and ſent out of their own counties into different parts of the kingdom. None of the bills, therefore, for reducing the Militia could affect the old Militia, the numbers of the regiments of which were always of neceſſity complete. It was true that in the bill of the laſt year, there did occur the words, “any Militia man:” but, when the preamble of that bill was looked to, no man would ſurely argue that “any Militia man” meant *every* man ſo denominated, or that it referred to the old Militia in the ſmalleſt degree. If, therefore, it referred not to the old Militia, ſtill leſs could it be ſaid to refer to the volunteer corps raiſed a few years ſince. At that time the Government thought it neceſſary to call upon the liberality of the country to ſubſcribe to its ſupport, and add to the means of public defence; and a wiſe call it was, as the event proved, ſince ſuch was the high ſpirit of the people, that he believed there was ſcarcely a county in the kingdom that did not raiſe a larger ſum than Government could poſſibly have expected. With this money the volunteer corps of Militia were raiſed; and therefore to attempt to corrupt and entice the men of the volunteer corps to enliſt in the line, was neither more nor leſs than a direct fraud on every county, from the volunteers of which ſuch men were ſeduced, as it was taking from them the men for whoſe eſpecial ſervices that county had paid. His Lordſhip animadverted on the three diſtinct bodies of military force raiſed at different times under the name of Militia, viz. the Old Militia, the Supplementary Militia, and the Volunteer Corps. Theſe were, he ſaid, ſpecific and very different corps, raiſed upon diſtinct principles, under the acts of the 26th and 37th of the King, notwithstanding that they were ſometimes blended. He ſaid, ſo evidently was the death-blow given to the Militia by the bill that had recently paſſed, and eſpecially by the act of the laſt year, and that then under conſideration, that he thought it would be better policy to annihilate the Militia altogether, than to go on thus violating all the principles on which it was inſtituted. He did not mean to ſay, that the meaſure would not answer its end to Government. On the contrary, he was perſuaded, that give the men permiſſion to get drunk, or make them drunk, without the money, and they would enliſt faſt enough; but he objected to the bill, as tending effectually to ruin the Militia. That the bill of laſt year had broken the zeal, and deſtroyed the

spirit of the Militia, Government would find, whenever the country was engaged in a future war ; they would then perceive that the country gentlemen were adverse to a service in which they had been so much mortified. It had hitherto been the pride of men of fortune in the country to accept of commissions, and spare no pains to make the corps they commanded of their own neighbours and tenants perfect in discipline, and capable of facing any force an enemy could send against them ; but, without resorting to the invidious appellation of drill serjeants, what must they think, when upon any vacancy, they knew they were not to ballot for a man for the Militia, but for a man to be sent to the drill, for so long as the men drilled and disciplined one year, were liable to be taken from them by such bills as the present, the next, what was a new ballot but chusing another man to be sent to the drill, and not for the Militia ? In Scotland, his Lordship said, there still was a constitutional force destined to the home defence of that part of the kingdom. The Scots Militia had not been yet degraded and disgraced as the English Militia had been. In England the Militia was so far changed in its principles, that they were to be compared to nothing but corps destined to drill new levies for the regular army. A noble Earl (Lord Westmorland) had said that he saw no difference between the Militia regiments now, and what they were formerly. Did he not ? The difference was manifest, and grievously felt by the officers of the Militia, whose zeal for the service was utterly exhausted. The noble Earl had also said he was inclined to support the present bill, because the officers of the Militia were not averse to it. In this he could assure the noble Earl he was wonderfully mistaken. The noble Earl had in one part of his speech complimented the individual Minister who had introduced the bill, not only for having conceived the project, but for having had finesse enough to conduct the bill through the other House of Parliament ; and yet in another part of his speech, he had said the principle of the bill was not a new one, but that it had received the sanction of the Legislature, and therefore he should support it. He, therefore, at one and the same time, complimented an individual for his finesse in getting the bill passed, and called it a bill founded on a principle sanctioned by the Legislature. It could not be entitled to support on both accounts. The fact was, it was by finesse, and finesse only, that Parliament had been induced to listen to such bills, which he repeated had already so far ruined and exhausted the zeal and spirit of the Militia officers, that if the bill passed, he thought the wisest addition that could be made to it, would be a clause enacting that the Militia itself should be annihilated, and expire when the bill

itself expired, viz. at the end of the war, and possibly at some future period, when the degradation put upon the Militia should have been forgotten, something like a Militia founded upon principles equally calculated for a war and peace establishment, might be raised.

Earl of WESTMORLAND said, he had made the observation that the Militia officers were not adverse to the bill, because he did not hear more than one Militia officer object to it in another House of Parliament, and in their own House that day he saw but few Militia officers present.

Earl of CAERNARVON said, the bill of last year had been introduced at a late period of a protracted session, when few noble Lords belonging to the Militia were in town, but that if the noble Earl imagined that the Militia Officers in general approved of the bill, because at such an unusually early opening of a session, few of them appeared in Parliament to oppose it, he was miserably mistaken.

Earl of HARDWICKE said, he admitted that the bill was liable to much objection, and that it contained many things that must be felt by Militia officers as grievous and painful, but that the propriety of enlarging the offensive force of the country induced him to give it his support, much as he deplored the necessity for any such bill. His Lordship said he flattered himself that the Militia officers would pass over any little temporary inconveniences that they may be put to in consequence of the measure then under consideration, and recollect that it was the interest of the country gentlemen and landholders to lay aside all personal considerations, and cordially to co-operate with the Legislature in adopting such measures as were the best calculated to accelerate a safe and permanent peace. His Lordship reminded the House of the very different state of the country in point of safety when the augmentation of the Militia was proposed from what it was at present. That augmentation was called forth about nine or twelve months after the bill passed, because then the French were making peace with the powers of the Continent, and concentrating a large mass of force for the purpose of invading this kingdom. It was consequently necessary to increase our internal defensive force as much as possible. No man would assert that the same danger threatened now. On the contrary, the change of affairs pointed out the policy of diminishing our defensive force and increasing our offensive force. For these and other reasons which his Lordship assigned, he declared that although he saw considerable objections to the bill if it had been introduced under other circumstances, he should now think it his duty to vote for the bill.

Lord GRENVILLE said, that what had fallen from his noble friend had in a great measure anticipated the observations he meant to have offered in respect to the several objections that had been made to the bill in the course of the debate. No noble Lord, he presumed, would suppose that he could reason so uncandidly or unfairly as to contend, that any bill of the nature of that under consideration could be drawn so as not to carry with it several grounds of objection. He was well aware that the present bill was by no means free from affording cause of uneasiness and disgust to some of the gentlemen in the Militia, but he trusted, with his noble friend, that the high spirit of those gentlemen, their love for their country, and their zeal for the preservation of their laws, their religion, and their property, for which we were now at war, would induce them to forego all little personal considerations, and to join heartily in every measure which the imperious necessity of our situation and our object suggested, for the most effectual promotion of the general interests of the empire. His noble relation (Earl of Caernarvon) had laid great stress on the burden of the Militia falling wholly on the landholders, but let the noble Earl recollect, that the landholders' property and that of every individual of every description would be rendered more safe and secure at home, and be best defended by offensive operations against the enemy abroad. The noble Earl had complained that a noble friend of his had praised the address of the person who had not only had the wisdom to conceive the present measure, but had contrived to adapt it so to the prejudices of the Militia officers, as to get it passed through the other House, with little opposition from gentlemen of that description. Surely no small praise was due to a Minister who had so managed a measure of that importance, as to make it liable to little or no objections; nor did his having done so, in the least affect the assertion, that the principle of the bill had received the sanction of the Legislature. After noticing some other parts of Lord Caernarvon's speech, Lord Grenville adverted to the argument of Lord Holland, with which he owned that he was not a little puzzled. The noble Lord had agreed with him in such essential points, that in far the greater part of his speech he appeared to approve of the expedition to Holland, and yet he afterwards argued in so extraordinary a manner, that he had been at a loss to conceive to what conclusion he meant to carry his reasoning. The noble Lord had admitted, that it would be a good thing to rescue the Dutch from the yoke of French tyranny, and restore the ancient Government of the country. He agreed that it would be advantageous to the Dutch themselves, and advantageous to this country; but he had added, provided the Dutch themselves

desired it, and that we had no assurances that such was the desire of the Dutch people. He knew not, he said, whether that part of the noble Lord's argument would not have better become the mouth of General Brune, or General Daendels, than the mouth of a British Legislator. Did the noble Lord wish to have the sense of the Dutch people taken numerically, that he was not satisfied with the proofs already given of the mass of the Dutch people being heartily sick of French Republican fraternization? Was the united voice of all the seamen of the Dutch fleet no proof of the general desire of the people to restore the Stadtholder? The noble Lord thought he had caught him in an inconsistency, because, upon a former occasion, when the Union with Ireland was the question under consideration, he had said, that it had been owing to the weakness of the Constitution of the Dutch Government that it had so easily fallen. He was ready to repeat that opinion, but there was no inconsistency in it, because if they should have the good fortune to reinstate the Stadtholder, he hoped to see those weaknesses in the Constitution of the Dutch Government removed, and its defects done away. But with all the defects, and all the weaknesses of the Dutch Government, as it originally stood, it was beyond all comparison better calculated for securing the comfort, the happiness, the lives, properties, and freedom of the Dutch people, than the galling yoke of French Republican tyranny, under which that unhappy nation at present groaned. The noble Lord had also thrown out a remark, as if in some paper, published by Government, the Stadtholder had been termed the *lawful* Sovereign of Holland. No noble Lord would surely imagine that either he, or any other of His Majesty's Ministers were so grossly ignorant of the ancient Constitution of Holland, as not to know that the States General were the Sovereigns of the country, and that the Stadtholder was the Executive of the Government, chosen by them—But he did assure the noble Lord, that in no paper published by Government had an inaccuracy escaped. The Declaration which His Majesty's Ministers had issued in Holland, he was happy to know, had afforded the most universal satisfaction. In the Dutch newspapers, indeed, he had seen the inaccuracy in question, but it was there imputed to a sea officer, whose duties were not limited to literary refinement, and who by the essential services lately rendered by him to his country, had proved that he had been much more usefully employed. His Lordship replied to other parts of Lord Holland's speech, and said, that as there was not one word in the bill that stated that the Militia Volunteers, whose services His Majesty, by virtue of it, would be enabled to accept, were to be employed in Holland, all the noble

Lord's reasoning on that point fell to the ground. With regard to the general policy of rescuing Holland from the power of the French, his Lordship said, he would refer the noble Lord to an authority which he presumed he would be inclined to respect. The noble Lord might have heard that about the year 1787, when this country had scarcely recovered in point of finance from the heavy expence of a long and unfortunate war, Government had thought it expedient to arm, in order to free Holland from the machinations of a powerful French faction, at that time eagerly endeavouring to overthrow the Dutch Government. On that occasion Parliament was unanimous in applauding the conduct of Government, and one gentleman (Mr. Fox) was among the foremost to praise them, who so seldom approved of their conduct, that when he did, his Lordship said, he was sure Ministers must have acted rightly.

Lord HOLLAND said, he would only detain their Lordships too minutes to explain. The noble Lord, as usual, had misconceived his argument. He had argued on the good of the expedition to Holland, and counterbalanced it with the evils that might result from it; whereas the noble Secretary of State spoke of his admissions as if he had made use of them as arguments against the bill. With regard to the word *numerically*, which the noble Lord had that evening, as he had often before, put into his mouth, he desired him to shew that he had, either then or on any former occasion, made use of it. He saw with what view the noble Secretary chose to impute the mention of the word *numerically* to him; but he never would sit silent and submit to such an imputation. His Lordship said, undoubtedly he should always feel the utmost respect for that authority referred to in the latter part of the noble Lord's speech; but, in respect to the matter alluded to, he happened to entertain an opinion different from that which fell from the authority in question, of whom it was always the custom of the noble Secretary to speak in the manner that he had done that night.

Lord Holland complimented Lord Hardwicke, who had, he said, with great candour put the argument on its right grounds, viz. that as it was necessary to diminish our defensive and increase our offensive force, he would support the bill, though, he admitted, it was liable to great objection.

The House divided—Contents, 26; Not Contents, 3.

The bill was ordered to be committed on the following day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, October 4.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, he rose in pursuance of the notice he had given to move the thanks of the House, to the Earl of Mornington, and to the officers, &c. who had a most important share in our late glorious successes in India. He confessed, he felt himself at a loss in what manner he ought to express the sentiments he felt upon this occasion. Perhaps, the best mode in which he could discharge his duty, would be to state the grounds of his motion in as succinct a manner as he could, and then the House would be able to form its own conclusion. It was with this view that he had moved for the papers relative to the war in India, which had been laid before the House and printed. The House would recollect, that for some years previous and subsequent to the formation of the Administration, under the auspices of his right honourable friend, the situation of affairs in India was one of the great topics upon which the greatest difference of opinion existed, and the greatest discussions took place. The points in difference were, with regard to the nature, the form, and the mode by which our possessions in that quarter ought to be governed. But there was one general principle, which was frequently introduced into these discussions, and upon which there was no difference of opinion, viz. that when a State possesses territories at a great distance from home, they can only be governed by a mixture of two ingredients. On the one hand, there must be a force sufficiently powerful to keep in awe those enemies internal and external, who might be inclined to disturb the peace of those territories. But power alone is not sufficient. In addition to force and power, there must be employed, justice, moderation, and an attention to the interests of others, or an empire can never exist for any length of time. He believed that he did not presume much, when he supposed that the perusal of the papers before the House must have given great satisfaction to every person interested in the happiness of that country, or the welfare of this. The propositions which appeared to him to be clearly established in those papers, were, that every exertion was made on our part in order to avoid any hostility with Tippoo Saib; and there could not exist the least doubt, but that at the moment when Tippoo Saib was pretending the most unbounded friendship and attachment to the British Government, he was entering into negotiations with the French, for purposes the most hostile to us. At the very moment

of those strong professions of friendship to us, there were the best grounds for suspecting him of secret negotiations with the French ; but now these suspicions were reduced to absolute certainty. It appeared, that at a very early period he avoided all explanation, for the purpose of preventing all proceedings on our part, until the season for military operations was past in that country, and for giving him an opportunity of completing his treaty with the French for our destruction. He did not state this upon light evidence ; indeed to those who had read the papers through, it would only be an affront to their understandings to read the passages upon which he founded his assertion. In these circumstances, the situation in which the Governor General of India was placed, was difficult in the extreme. On the one hand it was necessary to be very cautious not to encroach upon these principles of moderation, which had been established with regard to the Government of India. On the other hand, it was equally necessary not to suffer a false application of that principle so far to mislead our Government as not to make them anticipate that attack from Tippoo Saib, which they knew he was meditating. The first praise due to Lord Mornington, was for the strict and accurate medium, which (as it appeared from all the papers) he uniformly preserved. On the one hand, his conduct throughout the transaction, was firm and dignified, and on the other, he went every length which prudence would permit, to avoid hostilities with this old and inveterate enemy to the British name. Even after the period, when every attempt at negotiation had failed, when the army had marched, and when the storm of Seringapatam was resolved, and when there remained but one week for the continuance of operations, even then there was a door open for negotiation. Perhaps if he was inclined to be very critical, he might find fault with the great moderation which had been displayed. But God forbid he should find fault with the noble Lord for his conduct. After the army had entered the country of Mysore, the General had still the power of entering into a negotiation ; but it was plain that Tippoo's mind was made up, and that he was determined to try the fortune of arms. He trusted, perhaps, that he should at all events, experience the same lenity and moderation which had been shewn upon a former occasion. These were the two different lines of conduct adopted by the British Government and by Tippoo Sultaun. He would not take up the time of the House by enlarging upon the promptitude and wisdom with which the noble Lord issued his commands, nor the energy and courage with which they were obeyed. Without, therefore, saying any thing more about the conduct of the noble Lord, or the variety of

resources he had displayed, he would only say, that he felt that the noble Lord had conducted himself throughout in the most perfect and masterly manner. It might however be proper to say, that the noble Lord had acted upon that system which had been established before he went to India. He had walked in the footsteps of the illustrious character who had preceded him. The difficulties under which Lord Cornwallis had to labour, in the invasion of the Mysore, were greater than those which existed upon the present occasion. Lord Cornwallis had conducted his army by roads which he had to make himself to the capital of Tippoo Saib. He had forced his way through paths almost impervious. The power of that Prince was then considerably weakened, and great part of his dominions taken from him, consequently the army by which he was finally subdued, had fewer difficulties to contend against, than those which were surmounted by Lord Cornwallis. It was sufficient for him to say, that upon both occasions, the conduct displayed was most meritorious. Lord Cornwallis was desirous of acting with moderation, and thought proper in the hour of victory, to give a great example of lenity, by restoring him to his Throne, The experiment was fair and right, but afterwards when it appeared that the usurper of Mysore, adhered to a system of hostility against us, when he used every effort to undermine the English character, and destroy their power in India—when he suddenly suffered the English army to advance to his capital, without an attempt on his part to negotiate—then it became our duty to pursue all the advantages which the fate of the war had put in our hands. The whole formed one connected system, acted upon by two great characters, under different circumstances. Their situations were different, but their principle was the same. They had each of them acted as great men ought to do. They had shewn a due regard to the security of the British interest in India; and they had likewise displayed that justice and moderation which ought to form ingredients in every Government that wished to perpetuate its existence. The House would perceive that what he had hitherto said, related entirely to the transactions in the Mysore; but there was another circumstance to which he felt himself bound to call their attention, and that was, the event which happened at Hydrabad, and which, in his opinion, formed one of the most prominent features in Lord Mornington's conduct. In that Court there was a Prince who was known not to have the control over his own resources. There was in his dominions an army collected of 14,000 men, trained and disciplined by French officers. He would leave it to the House to judge what the effect of such an army, so disciplined, might have

been, if the grand confederacy which was planned had taken place. If we had on the one side been attacked with all the force of Tippoo Saib, if Zemaun Shaw had advanced against us from the North West parts of India, and if to these were added the French force expected, would not our situation have been dangerous in the extreme, particularly if they were joined by this well disciplined army of 14,000 men? He would not trace the whole of the noble Lord's conduct upon this occasion; it was sufficient to say, that he had the address to destroy the French force in the Deccan: but the result was still more striking; that very army which had been for years preparing to act against us, was placed under the command of British officers, and formed part of the army which stormed the capital of the Mysore. Indeed the hand of Providence appeared most visibly in many of the occurrences of that day. That very same General Baird, who was one of the unfortunate men who was taken prisoner last war by Tippoo Saib, who was thrown, with his wounds undressed, into a dungeon, and loaded with irons, in which situation he remained near three years—it was the hand of this very General Baird, that an over-ruling Providence made use of to destroy the tyrant by whom he had been oppressed.

Having said thus much, he now felt himself called upon to do justice to another noble and illustrious character; he meant Lord Clive. To a man of a little, jealous mind—to a man who had any other object but the welfare of his country at heart—it might have been an unpleasant circumstance to have the Governor General to come and take, as it were, the command from him. But no such sentiment entered his mind; there was no part of his conduct that did not raise him in the estimation of every man. Anxious for the prosperity of his country, he zealously co-operated with that man who might be thought, by a little mind, to be depriving him of his share of glory. He said this, not from the public documents only, but from the most private correspondence, which that noble Lord could never suppose that he (Mr. Dundas) would see. Lord Clive's object was the good of his country, and in the pursuit of that object no little mean feeling of jealousy for a moment entered his noble mind; he wished to see the British power rise to a height the foundation of which was laid by his noble father some years ago. He was sure he need not say more to the House upon this subject; they would, he was sure, feel that such a mind was well entitled to the warmest approbation that could be bestowed upon it.

With regard to the military proceedings, there appeared throughout a degree of firmness, promptitude, and alacrity, from the General

down to the common soldier. He had taken up as little of the time of the House as possible ; but he hoped that in what he had said he proved that it was, on our part, a just, necessary, and defensive war, and that all the characters employed in it had most completely done their duty, and were therefore fully entitled to the thanks of their country. They had, by their united exertions, destroyed the old and implacable enemy of the British name, and had placed our empire in India in a situation of security which nothing but the grossest ignorance and misconduct could destroy. The foundations of a great and permanent empire were now laid. All that was required of us was to let the surrounding powers know that we were great and powerful, and that we could, when necessary, bring that power into action : but above all, we should let them know that our sentiments are those of justice and moderation, and that we wish to pay the greatest attention to their happiness ; that we should adopt every measure by which this country could be endeared to them ; that we should imprint upon their minds that their real happiness depends upon their being in friendship with, and under the protection of, the British Government.

He should not trouble the House any longer, but would now vote the following Resolutions, viz.

“ Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to the Right Honourable Richard Lord Wellesley, Earl of Mornington in the kingdom of Ireland, and Governor General of the British possessions in the East Indies, for the wisdom, decision, and energy, with which he discharged the arduous duties of his station, from the time of his taking upon him the said Government to the glorious termination of the late war by the capture of Seringapatam ; during which period, by opposing to the perfidy of the late Sultaun of Myfore an uniform moderation, dignity, and firmness, and by counteracting with equal promptitude and ability the dangerous intrigues and projects of the French, particularly by destroying their power and influence in the Deccan, he prepared the way for the rapid and brilliant operations carried on under his superintendance and direction, the result of which has finally disappointed all the designs of our enemies in that quarter, and has established, on a basis of permanent security, the tranquillity and prosperity of the British empire in India.

“ Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to the Right Honourable Lord Clive, Governor of the settlement of Fort St. George, for his zealous, cordial, and honourable concurrence, in forwarding the wise and dignified views of the Governor General in Council,

by which he has furnished a salutary and memorable example of the advantage of unanimity and concord among the persons employed in high stations in the British dominions in the East Indies, and has, to the utmost of his power, promoted the success of those measures, from which the most important public benefits have resulted to this country.

“ Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to Jonathan Duncan, Esquire, Governor of Bombay, for the zeal and promptitude of his conduct in preparing the army of that presidency for the field, agreeably to the orders of the Governor General in Council, whereby that army was enabled materially to contribute to the successful and glorious termination of the late war in India.

“ Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to Lieutenant General George Harris, for the whole of his able and meritorious conduct in the command of the forces of His Majesty and of the East-India Company, during the late glorious and decisive war with the Sultaun of Myfore, and particularly for the ability, judgment, and energy, with which he planned and directed the assault of Seringapatam, the success of which brilliant achievement has so highly contributed to the glory of the British name, and to the permanent tranquillity of our possessions in the East.

“ Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to Lieutenant General James Stuart, Commander in Chief of the Bombay army, which so gloriously co-operated in the success of the late campaign in India; and also, to Major Generals John Floyd, Thomas Bridges, William Popham, James Hartley, and David Baird, and to the respective officers of the armies employed on that occasion against the enemy, for their distinguished and meritorious services.

“ Resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“ That this House doth highly approve of, and acknowledge, the services of the non-commissioned officers and private soldiers employed against the enemy in the late glorious and decisive war in the East Indies; and that the same be signified to them by the commanders of the several corps, who are desired to thank them for their gallant behaviour.”

It was then ordered,

“ That Mr. Speaker do transmit the said resolutions to the Right Honourable the Governor General; and that his Lordship be requested, by Mr. Speaker, to signify the same to the Governors General, and other officers referred to therein.”

Saturday, October 5.

Mr. Chancellor PITT stated to the House, that the convenience and good effects which had been experienced by the bill enabling His Majesty to call Parliament together, at a short notice, in case of prorogation, had been such, that he wished to extend the same power to His Majesty, in case of an adjournment. He therefore moved for leave to bring in a bill to enable His Majesty, his heirs and successors, to assemble Parliament at a short period, in case it should be adjourned. Leave given.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt then brought up the bill, which recited the act of the 37th of his present Majesty, relative to the calling of Parliament in case of prorogation, and stated the expediency of adopting a similar regulation when the Parliament was adjourned. It was read a first, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he had no objection to having the period for assembling Parliament shortened; but he wished the bill should be printed previous to the second reading.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, there was no necessity; the principle of the bill was very obvious; it was merely that of enabling His Majesty to call Parliament together at a short notice, in case it should be separated by a long adjournment.

Mr. TIERNEY observed, that as, from the last observation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it appeared likely a long adjournment would take place, he wished previously to be informed whether the right honourable gentleman had it in contemplation to make any motion relative to the treaty between this country and Russia, on the subject of the troops furnished by Russia for the attack against Holland.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, the treaties had been laid before Parliament, and the House having agreed to a vote of credit, he thought a specific motion on the subject unnecessary.

Mr. TIERNEY replied, that by the treaty only 45,000 Russians were stipulated for; but he understood 17,000 more were to be provided, for which a considerable sum was to be paid monthly. He also understood, that these 17,000 troops were to winter in England, in case the expedition against Holland should not be persisted in. He thought this was a subject which required the serious consideration of the House, and he therefore hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would appoint some day for bringing it forward. He said, he should have moved to that effect himself, if the refusal

of the Minister to have a call of the House, and the absence of so many Members, had not justified him to the contrary in not doing so.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt made no reply.

The House, on the motion of Mr. Rose, having resolved itself into a Committee, to consider of the duties payable on starch, he observed, that the price of starch had risen from 70s. to 5l. 10s. and 5l. 15s. within the last fortnight. He wished, therefore, to equalize the duties payable on starch imported with the duties on starch manufactured at home. This measure, he considered, would tend to reduce the price; and he accordingly moved a resolution to that effect, which was agreed to by the Committee. The House resumed, and the report was ordered to be received on the Monday following.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, October 7.

On the order of the day for the third reading of the Militia Service Extension Bill being moved,

Lord HOLLAND rose and spoke nearly to the following effect: My Lords, since the last debate on this bill, I have looked carefully over it, and several parts appeared to me so objectionable, that it was my intention to have moved some amendments in the Committee; but partly from neglect and carelessness, for which I ought to apologize to the House, and partly from its being unusual to transact business on a Saturday, on which day it passed that stage, I lost the opportunity: I therefore now move, that the bill be recommitted; but in candour and fairness, and also to prevent trouble, I shall take the liberty of stating the nature of my objections, in order that if the motion be refused, I may be able to consider such refusal as tantamount to a rejection of those amendments which I should wish to propose. My first objection is to the preamble of the bill, in which the Government sought to be restored is styled "the legitimate Government of Holland." Lawful Government are relative terms, and I have no idea of a Government where there are no people governed. But it is not merely on right and principle that I ground my objection, but on policy; and from every motive of that kind, I would propose to substitute the word "ancient"

in the place of "lawful." The retaining of that term may involve us in difficulties, and cannot be productive of any advantage. It cannot in the least tend to the success of our views, but may on the contrary tend to defeat them. By the negotiation at Lisle we have actually acknowledged the existing Government of Holland to be the lawful Government; for the only question of legality that can occur between power and power is the legality and competency to treat, which by that measure stands on our part admitted. I may therefore be allowed to say that such an event is within the verge of possibility; and should it happen, I need not anticipate the difficulties which it might occasion, by observing how little faith or confidence the enemy could hereafter place in our sincerity, or any propositions made to a Government, the incompetence of which to accede or reject we had thus solemnly recorded. The next objection which I have to make arises out of the third clause of the bill. The object of the bill, as I understand, is to raise a disposable force; and yet in this clause I find words, in opposition to, or at all events restraining, that principle; for there is a limitation that the men thus procured are not to serve out of Europe. In the first place, then, I consider this a sort of trick, or enticement, inconsistent with the candour, and manly dignity of the army, and unworthy of its spirit and courage, to which the offer of such an allurements is an insult. And, secondly, I consider it as creating an unfair and unjust distinction. No two establishments, in the mode of their creation and end, can be more distinct than the Militia and the regular force. But if the Militia is to be melted down into the standing army; if the men thus drafted are to be officered in the same manner, paid in the same manner, and to enjoy all the other rights and privileges of troops of the line, why should they not be liable to the same inconveniences? We know very well, that there is a partiality in the army for European, in preference to foreign service; the proposed distinction, therefore, is hard and unjust, and cannot fail to excite jealousy and discontent. At the same time that I make these objections, I admit it would be a want of candour, were I not to express my approbation of that clause, by which the service is limited to five years, or during the war. I have been always of opinion, that nothing could be more advantageous to the army of every description, and the country, than if men were to be enlisted for a specific term, instead of for life; and on this subject, too, I should make some observations in the Committee. This, my Lords, is all I think it necessary to say at present. If the bill should be recommended, I shall explain myself more fully.

Lord GRENVILLE said, he did not know any term so proper as that of "lawful," when applied to the ancient government of Holland. It was the government which we had guaranteed by several treaties to support and maintain, and which therefore we must recognize as the lawful government, unless we violated the word and spirit of our engagements. With regard to the limitation of the service required to Europe, he could see no objection on the ground stated by the noble Lord. The service wanted was avowed, and known to be in Europe, and Europe only. It would be therefore idle and absurd, when wishing to encourage men to enlist from the Militia into the standing army, to discourage them, by proposing a service to them more extensive than that which we know they were really wanted for.

Lord HOLLAND. I thought the noble Lord, when he rose to answer my objections, would have assigned some reason for not leaving the word lawful out of the preamble. What good purpose, I ask, can it answer, if we should succeed? and if we should not, I think I have shewn that it may produce mischief. I have shewn no harm can result, in any event, from the omission of the word; but that a great deal may arise from retaining it. Is it not a circumstance of historical notoriety, that the treaties entered into between Louis the XIVth and the Pretender, in which his government was recognised as the legal government, were afterwards a source of great jealousy and distrust between France and this country? and may not a similar cause, which I have already stated to be within the verge of possibility, produce a similar effect? But I observe, that on every temporary and fleeting success, Ministers never fail to use a galling and irritating language, which, in case of any reverse, they are the first to recant. The consequence of this is, that it only interferes with every object of a pacific nature; for after thus exciting animosity and discontent, it is impossible to expect that friendly disposition, which a contrary conduct might produce.

The question was then put on Lord Holland's motion, for the commitment of the bill, which was negatived without a division, and the bill was accordingly read a third time, and passed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, October 7.

Mr. BRAGGE moved the order of the day for the second reading of the bill for shortening the term of the meeting of Parliament in cases of adjournment.—Read.

Mr. JONES observed, that he had no particular objection to the bill, and the less so because he thought there was every probability of gentlemen being soon called together again after the adjournment. As, however, he took the liberty to second the motion for the call of the House, he thought it his duty to say a few words more; and particularly so, as he understood there had been a large sum of money voted by way of supply, though the Parliament were called together for a different purpose. The time, he said, was very critical, and even the fate of the civilized world seemed to depend on the present decisions and exertions of this country. He thought it highly expedient, therefore, that the House should not adjourn, but that its sittings should be permanent: and the news even which he had heard since he came down to the House, though favourable, still confirmed him in the opinion, that the House should continue to sit. He would wish, however, to be understood as not objecting to the bill.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, he only wished the same power to be granted to His Majesty in cases of adjournment of that House as already existed in cases of prorogation.

Mr. JONES said, he perfectly understood the nature of the bill; it was to call Members together after adjournment. The bill was read a second time, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

Tuesday, October 8.

Nothing of moment occurred.

Wednesday, October 9.

Upon the notice for the third reading of the bill to enable His Majesty to call Parliament together at a short notice, in case of adjournment,

Mr. TIERNEY rose. He said he had no objection to the bill, but he wished that a clause should be introduced, in order to enforce

a call of the House whenever it should be thought necessary to assemble Parliament at a short notice, in pursuance of its regulations. He did not mean to cast any imputation upon the present Ministers; but he could not but express his apprehensions, lest at some future time other Ministers should take an unfair advantage of those whose opposition to their measures they might dread, by calling Parliament together on a sudden, in order to pass some particular or unpopular law: to obviate this, he wished the right honourable gentleman would devise some means for insuring a call of the House, whenever the Parliament should be suddenly called together.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, it was impossible to agree to the suggestion of the honourable gentleman; it was not conformable to any practice of Parliament that he knew of to make provision for a call of the House on the assembling of Parliament: it was always within the province of the House to have a call of the Members when such a measure was necessary; but he conceived there could be no call of the House that could operate as a notice of a more special nature than that of His Majesty assembling Parliament at the short period of fourteen days.

Mr. TIERNEY insisted that it was impossible for gentlemen in distant parts of the country to be apprized of the meeting of Parliament at so short a notice as fourteen days. Ministers might, therefore, be enabled merely to fill the House with their particular friends, in order to carry a particular object. It was not to be supposed our ancestors were foolish in thinking forty days necessary. He wished, if possible, to guard against Ministers packing a House of Commons, which they certainly would be able to do by the present bill.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that the very proceeding of having a call of the House shewed that the period of fourteen days was sufficient notice to all the Members to attend; and for a default of their attendance upon such notice, they were liable to be taken into custody.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that upon a call of the House, the Members were all supposed to be in town.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that so far from there being any such supposition, upon a call of the House, the Speaker was frequently desired to send letters to the Sheriffs of the different counties.

Mr. JONES asked, whether, when the Parliament was again assembled, it was the intention of the right honourable gentleman to oppose a motion for a call of the House.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, the propriety of such a measure must be left to the House to be determined; for his own part, unless there were better grounds stated in support of such a motion, than had been stated when it was last proposed, he should certainly object to it.

Mr. JONES maintained, there were good grounds for a call of the House: he complained that the subject of the Russian treaty had not been discussed.

An additional clause was brought up by Mr. Chancellor Pitt; after which the bill was read a third time and passed.

Mr. ABBOT gave notice, that he should take an early opportunity, after the approaching recess, of moving for an inquiry into the state of the public records of the kingdom, for the purpose of ascertaining their present condition, of providing more effectually for their preservation in future, and rendering the use of them more convenient to His Majesty's subjects. He thought it proper to add, that the plan which he had it in view to propose, was the same as was undertaken by Lord Halifax, in the reign of Queen Anne, and adopted by the House of Commons, after the burning of the Cotton Library, in the reign of his late Majesty.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, it gave him great satisfaction to find that the honourable Member had turned his thoughts to this subject, as it was undoubtedly of great importance; and that he himself had long regretted the state of the public records of the country; and he assured the honourable Member that the plan proposed should have his zealous co-operation.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, October 11.

Lord HOLLAND said, he rose in pursuance of a notice given by him in the beginning of the week, of an intended motion, which, before he sat down, he would submit to their Lordships' consideration, in the shape of an Address to the Throne. He trusted it was unnecessary to assure the House, that in making the motion, he was actuated by no other motive than that which resulted from a thorough persuasion that the line of conduct and system, therein recommended, was the only one that was consistent with the safety, the interest, the dignity of this country. He could not, however, disguise from himself the great disadvantages under which he laboured from the singularity of his opinions in that House. He was not so blind as not to perceive, nor was he so conceited as to complain of the very evident symptoms by which their Lordships manifested how irksome it was to listen continually to one, who had so little right to take up their attention as himself. This was a serious subject of dread to him; and nothing but his duty had compelled him to encounter it: nay, he was afraid that on that day he had even sacrificed much to that dread and apprehension of fatiguing the House by repeated motions: for when, on Parliament being summoned, he had reflected on the successes of our Allies on the Continent, on the rapid and favourable change in the situation of the affairs of the confederacy, his mind was so strongly impressed with the persuasion that this was the most favourable period (one, perhaps, excepted) for negociation that had occurred during the war; he was so thoroughly convinced of the danger of not availing ourselves of this favourable moment for that purpose, that he could not, consistently with any sense of public duty, have attended the public business of that House, and not in obedience to so strong an opinion, made one effort to conjure their Lordships to act on that opinion; and, by so doing, prepare the way for the restoration of peace, which was so necessary to the tranquillity and happiness of mankind, and so essential to the welfare of this country in particular. Impressed with these opinions, and actuated by these motives, he looked over, as was his duty, the documents which were in the possession of the House, and had any relation to the general state of affairs: among them he, of course, perused the two treaties with Russia, which were on their table—but when he did peruse them, the terms of the treaties appeared to him so extravagant, and the tendency of one

provision in them so alarming, so dangerous, so unconstitutional, that if he had continued to attend the House, and not made them a subject of animadversion, he should have considered himself as an accomplice in a prodigal waste of public money, and a daring violation of the constitution of this country!—With these views, he should have troubled the House with two distinct motions—one, on the treaties; and the other for peace:—but the dread of fatiguing their Lordships, to which he had before alluded, was so strong on his mind, that he preferred, with some disadvantage to the two questions, to throw them into one motion. Whatever they might think of the effect, their Lordships, he was sure, would forgive the motive. He should now proceed to observe on the treaties. Their Lordships would recollect that, at an advanced period last session, His Majesty sent a message, acquainting the House of his having entered into a provisional treaty with his ally the Emperor of Russia, and of the intention of that Power's furnishing 45,000 troops to act against the Enemy. The Parliament, in consequence of that message, had liberally granted the supplies necessary to enable His Majesty to provide for such a number of men. After a message of this kind, it was not without the extremest surprise, that at the present moment, when the Parliament had been assembled with the avowed intention of authorising His Majesty to avail himself of the voluntary services of the Militia to enlist in the army, and for that purpose only, it was not without surprise, he repeated, that he perceived His Majesty's Ministers had concluded an additional and unheard-of treaty with the Emperor of Russia for 17,593 troops, over and above the 45,000 stipulated for by the first treaty, and that Parliament had to provide for the support of 62,000, instead of 45,000 men. But if this circumstance surprised him, how much more was he astonished, when, upon examining the treaty for the 17,593 men, he perceived that it had been entered into anterior to the treaty for the 45,000; and found that, notwithstanding its existence when the first treaty was mentioned to Parliament, His Majesty's Ministers had thought proper to conceal it! What was he to think of the conduct of those Ministers who, when they were talking of the zeal and magnanimity of the Emperor of Russia in sending 45,000 men into the field, were, at the same time, secretly stipulating to pay him for 62,000 men? When he had heard Ministers talking in the strain they did of the zeal and magnanimity of the Court of Petersburg, he certainly had expected that those eulogiums would have led to more gratuitous exertions; and he was surprised, after the pomp and parade with which the exertions of the Emperor of Russia had been announced, that he should have stipu-

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lated with this country for an additional supply of 17,000 troops. When he recollected that the war had been of seven years duration ; that at different periods this country had had alliances with all the Powers of the Continent, except the one with whom we were immediately at war ; and that we had kept them all successively in our pay ; when he recollected also, that the Emperor of Russia had, during that period, been exempt from the burden of the war ; when he recollected the vast territory of that Monarch, and considered also how loud Ministers had been in praise of his zeal and magnanimity ; he could not but be surprised that the exertion of that boasted zeal and magnanimity should have actuated him to no other exertion against the Enemy, than that of driving a hard bargain with this country, and agreeing to furnish a supply of troops upon being paid an extravagant sum for them ; he did not mean to speak with disrespect of the Emperor of Russia, by stating, that he had driven a hard bargain with this country : when he spoke of the Emperor of Russia, he wished to be understood as meaning the Cabinet of Peterburgh, and not that Monarch personally. When he had heard then of the zeal and earnestness of the Cabinet of Peterburgh, and the manner in which its co-operation with this country had been announced, he had formed an expectation that its services had been actuated by less interested motives. He meant not to dispute the zeal of that Cabinet ; so far from it, that he should presently have occasion to shew their Lordships strong reasons for apprehending that that zeal was to the full as ardent as any reasonable man could wish ; but he must say, that he was ready to pronounce that zeal, from a perusal of the treaties, to be of a nature that did not lead the Court of Peterburgh to neglect a strict attention to its interests in treaties and arrangements with their Allies. It was a zeal by no means unwilling to repose on the purse of its friends. There was a homely, but expressive German proverb, that said, " Give me a horse of my friend's, and spurs of my own, and I will make my journey right short." We had experienced, in the course of the war, how well that national proverb was understood in Germany ; and he thought he could shew to the House, that if the expression was not translated into Russian, the maxim it inculcated was fully understood and acted up to at Peterburgh ; for marked as the war had been by improvident and extravagant subsidiary treaties with the German powers, he would undertake to prove that the terms demanded and procured, by the magnanimous and zealous Court of Peterburgh, were to the full as extravagant as those with Germany. He would instance that concluded with Prussia in 1794. He believed it was a general opinion, that the Court of Berlin, in that treaty, had

driven a very hard bargain indeed with this country; and it had been much the fashion with Opposition then, and with every body lately, so to consider it. Many who now heard him must recollect with what acuteness of argument, with what force of reasoning, a noble Lord, (who, to the loss of the House, to the detriment of the Country at large, and of that part of it which he represented here in particular, had now no seat in the House,) attempted to draw from the terms of that treaty, a conclusion, either that the Court of Berlin was indifferent in the common cause, or was actuated by selfish and avaricious views. He grounded this argument on the extravagance of the terms; and those who defended the treaty would recollect how difficult it was to parry his reasonings, and elude his conclusions: but if that noble Lord could on that night be introduced once more into the body of the House, how fully, how triumphantly might he be answered! His adversary might then say, "You calumniated the King of Prussia, when you said that his stipulations were exorbitant: you calumniated him, when you told us that the hire of his armies was extravagant: you injured him, when you drew from the disproportion of his gratuitous assistance to his power an inference of his pusillanimity or his indifference—For here is the Emperor of the most extensive empire, the Autocrat of all the Russias himself, who demands as much, or even more, for a similar succour; but his zeal is manifest and notorious; his magnanimity indisputable and incontrovertible." He said he would prove that such an answer might be given with truth from the items of the two treaties. He would prove first, that Russia had made a more advantageous treaty, in point of pecuniary arrangement, for herself, than Prussia; and then proceed to shew, from other causes also, that the agreement with Russia was more expensive to this country. The number of men furnished by the two Powers were within a hundred and fifty, or thereabouts, the same; and he proceeded to shew from the different items, that the payments of this country to Russia, exclusive of the freight, would amount to 2,279,000*l.*; whereas that of Prussia had amounted to 2,190,400*l.*; the difference was not great, but of the two, the Russian treaty exacted more; and in that with Prussia, we furnished only the money, and did not bind ourselves to any other engagements. When, also, he came to compare the expences of the two treaties to this country, he must take into the calculation the expence of freight which we were also to defray; and there was also an agreement in the separate article, No. 2 and No. 3, by which we engaged, if he understood it, independently of all the other pecuniary succours, to subsist their crews, and repair their vessels, at our

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own expence: so that the same number, or nearly the same number, of troops, were purchased by this country from Russia, by a subsidy exceeding by near 400,000*l.* the treaty with Prussia, which had hitherto been cited as extravagant; for the subsidy, for the freight, exclusive of the engagements he had just mentioned, amounted to 235,704*l.*; which, added to 2,279,000*l.* made the sum of 2,514,704*l.* exclusive of those additional succours. He had calculated both treaties, as supposing the troops in either case to be employed for one twelvemonth; and thought he had proved the prodigal manner in which the public money was lavished beyond all former example: but he would own, that the other point was, to his mind, a matter of infinitely greater importance.

By the seventh article between His Majesty and the Emperor of Russia, His Majesty engages to receive, in case of certain events, 17,000 Russian troops into England, and to keep them here for the winter. His Lordship said, he should have thought there was no necessity to point out to the House that the Crown of Great Britain has no right, consequently no legal power, to introduce any foreign troops into Great Britain without the consent, or subsequent approbation of Parliament. He knew there had been a discussion of that subject, and he knew there was but one person in that House who had entertained a doubt upon that subject, and even that person did not affirm the legality. The Bill of Indemnity that was moved for to protect those who had advised the measure in 1795, was resisted, because the necessity of the case was said to be its justification. Had he been then in the House, he believed he should have voted for the Bill of Indemnity in that case—but here an engagement was made to receive into this island, and to provide for 17,000 foreign troops, without the approbation of Parliament. This, he understood, to be quite unconstitutional. He was not aware of the necessity of quoting authorities upon this point, because he conceived it to be clear, and upon which no doubt was entertained by any man who ever had any reputation, as a man who understood the Constitution of England. However, to those who called for authority for every thing, he would quote the Resolution of the House of Commons of 1641. Here his Lordship read the words of that Resolution, the substance of which is, “That whoever shall give the Crown advice for the bringing into this country any foreign force without the consent of Parliament, shall be adjudged an enemy to this kingdom.” His Lordship then quoted the case of 1756, when Mr. Speaker Onslow, at the bar of the House of Lords, made a spirited declaration against the landing of foreign troops without the approbation of Parliament, and considered an attempt to do it as an alarming thing.

But without debating that point, which was, indeed, too clear to be doubted, he would only say, that if the Cabinet of Petersburg did not, the Cabinet of London did understand what it was to send a message to Parliament, requiring its approbation to a measure of public consequence. The Ministers should either have rendered that article conditional, on the approbation of Parliament, or, the moment the Parliament had met, have applied for a specific legislative act to enable them to put it into execution. But yet so dear to the nation was the faith of His Majesty's public engagements, that he should wish to see even this engagement fulfilled, illegal as it was; an illegality could be cured, but a breach of faith could not—and therefore his motion, after protesting against the illegality of the act, to prevent its being established as a precedent, proposed to carry it into effect. But here he could not help calling on the House to consider what would be the effect of such a power of entering into engagements being vested in the Crown—a power not pretending to have any legal existence, and only defended in the exercise in 1794, upon the plea of absolute necessity. This had no such excuse; here was a premeditated act; an engagement was entered into, though not carried into effect, and no communication was made upon the matter to Parliament; and let this be acknowledged as a right, said his Lordship, and it will remain as a precedent. If the Crown has this power, it must be notorious to the world that all the fine things which have been said of your Constitution, are mere idle vapour, or unmeaning rant—that all the periods you have been turning, with a view of illustrating the excellence of your Constitution, are a silly declamation; for that you have no liberty; you have not the skeleton of a free state, no, not the shadow of a Constitution; but by the mere sufferance of the Executive Government, that can overwhelm you at once with a foreign force; unless you enter a protest against this practice, there is no security for the personal freedom of any man in the kingdom for an hour. But it may be said, that these fears and alarms are the mere idle speculations of a visionary politician, that they are the exaggerated description of a factious spirit, and that there is no reason really to suspect that His Majesty's Ministers will make any improper use of the stipulation they have entered into; that I cannot, that I do not, entertain such apprehensions myself. To which I answer, whether I have any suspicion of them or not, my knowledge of the Constitution tells me I am bound to act as if I had such suspicions; and, that if we pass this over without observation, and hereafter it be made the precedent for such proceedings as I allude to, our posterity would think it, a

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poor, a sorry excuse, for our neglect, "that we really never could have believed it."

His Lordship then observed, that with regard to the particular object to which this Russian force was to be directed, the House were already in possession of his opinion, and that opinion remained unaltered: he still considered the expedition to be imprudent and ill concerted: he would not expatiate on the subject, as he had already delivered his sentiments on it; but as the object must fail, if the minds of the Dutch were alienated, he could not but repeat, that the making their country the scene of warfare, the introduction of a large army, and part of that army Russian, was but an unfortunate expedient for conciliating the people. He meant not to charge the government of this country, nor the government of Petersburg, on that account; but it was a notorious fact, however ungracious a subject of observation it might now be, that the mode of warfare adopted by the Russians was at all times dreadful. It was a point not to be disputed, that of all European powers, the army of Russia rendered the calamities of war greatest to those who unfortunately inhabited the country where it was carried on; he meant not to press this now on any other score but that of mere policy; but who could deny, that of all armies that army must be the worst instrument to conciliate the affection of the inhabitants in Holland. The people of Holland were a cool-judging people, attached to the comforts of life, and to their ancient customs, tender of their property, and sacrificing every thing to preserve it. Nothing could compensate them for rendering their country the theatre of war; and it was obvious, that our present attack against that country, if successful, would render it the theatre of war for two campaigns. Our valour in Holland had been, as he trusted the valour of English troops would always be, brilliant and glorious; but our progress nevertheless had been slow, and much more so than had been expected; for it had been supposed, even by the treaty he held in his hand, that 30,000 men, or even fewer, would have been a sufficient number to have effected the conquest, and we had already been obliged to send a much larger force. He desired their Lordships to consider, whether the inconveniencies the people of Holland, even supposing them to be favourably disposed towards their ancient government, must be subject to in consequence of their country becoming the theatre of war, might not be such as to induce them rather to prefer the present system, than to purchase their ancient one at so dear a rate. But, for argument sake, he would suppose the successes of this country against Holland to be more rapid than they really were; he would suppose that our army would

march to Amsterdam, nay more, that it would get to Rotterdam; still it would not be a bloodless contest; and even then, with Amsterdam and Rotterdam, but with the barrier towns in the hands of the enemy (and the most sanguine could not expect them in this campaign), Holland was a precarious, a very precarious possession indeed. He would ask any man, Ministers themselves, would our army, large and powerful as it was, be able to secure the people of Amsterdam and Rotterdam from the incursions of the French? Certainly not; and, consequently, allowing us to be successful, Holland would still remain the theatre of war, and the people would charge it to our account. He then considered the general policy of an alliance between this country and Russia; and stated his opinion, that Russia, if she had the same views, was the natural ally of this country; but with regard to the present contest, he feared lest that earnestness and zeal in the cause which were imputed to Russia might lead the Court of Petersburg to make declarations which, he trusted, we could not, and which we ought not, to follow. He held in his hand a declaration made in the name of that Power: he did not know whether he ought to consider it as of any authority, but he would quote it, in order, if it was unauthenticated, Ministers might contradict it. It purported to be the declaration of Russia against Spain; and in the name of Paul the First began thus—We and our allies, “*having determined to destroy the iniquitous power that rules France*”—he would read no more of it; but to those who were in the habit of complaining of insolent public papers of the French Republic, he would recommend the perusal of the whole. If such were the views of this country as well as of Russia, it was our duty distinctly to avow them, either as we looked forward to a successful termination of the contest, or the attainment of a favourable peace. If we had not pledged ourselves to the extent it appeared the Emperor of Russia had by his declaration, it was our duty to shew the people of France that we were not engaged in the war with views to the same extent. If there were no other reason for adopting his motion than this, he should recommend it to the House, because the paper he alluded to called upon us peremptorily to declare, if, as allies to Paul the First, we were engaged in that mad, that desperate undertaking, or not? but he would own he thought something more than a mere declaration of the object of war was necessary; for he contended, with one exception, that this was the most favourable period that had occurred during the whole course of the war for a negotiation for peace. He thought it the one most likely to lead to such event, most auspicious in its appearance; but even if it were not successful, the very at-

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tempt, he said, would be attended with great, with incalculable, advantages. He knew it was the peculiarity of the present times to regard those who stood up the advocates of peace with a sort of suspicion. He knew when the argument was to lead to a termination of bloodshed and hostility, all unaccountable as it was, the presumption, the prejudice was against him; yet he would freely confess, that if he had nothing to recommend his motion but a contemplation of the horrors of war and the necessity of peace; if he had only to point to their Lordships in support of address, the thousands and thousands that were hurried from their families and homes to be butchered in every corner of Europe,—of Europe did he say, in every corner of the world,—if he could only beg them to contemplate the peasant, whose unfortunate lot it was to inhabit the countries that were the theatre of war (and how extensive were those scenes of calamity and distress!)—if he could only entreat them to reflect on these unhappy and miserable peasants, alternately the victims of each contending army, their cottages burnt, themselves insulted, their property plundered, their wives and their daughters violated, themselves, their possessions, and their families, the prey of cruelty, avarice, and lust,—if he had no other motive but a wish, a hope, to put an end to these horrible excesses, before God he knew, before man he trusted, that he should be excused for his conduct on that day. But in a much narrower point of view, the necessities of our own country demanded peace: he would have them look to the waste of British blood and British treasure; he would have them reflect on the burdens we were imposing on our countrymen, and entailing on our posterity; and he would tell them, that these called loudly for negotiation:—but these were not half the calamities of war: there were other less evident, but equally pernicious consequences, attending all protracted wars, but which formed the very essence, the characteristic, the prominent feature of this—he meant that it familiarized us to every species of cruelty, to every scene of horror and bloodshed; that it hardened our hearts, extinguished every good passion and affection, erased every benevolent feeling, annihilated every noble sentiment—Yes, he would venture to assert, that there was not a man who took any interest in the concerns of the world, who, if he examined his own mind, if he fairly scrutinized his own conscience, would not discover that, during the course of this war, he was become a worse man,—that his horror of crimes was diminished,—that his feeling for the calamities of others was deadened, if not extinguished,—it engendered a military disposition, and induced men to seek for employment, not in habits of industry, not in agriculture, but in rapacity

and plunder; a mode of life from which, as had been justly observed by Mr. Burke, men seldom returned. It created that military spirit which was the parent of war, and that rancour, that jealousy, in Courts, which lay the foundation of distant quarrels and interminable hostilities. If then he could be accused, with any foundation, as he trusted he would soon shew he could not, of a wish to wave any punctilio, to abate a little national pride, to sacrifice a little of what might be called dignity, he confessed that the accusation was such as would not sink him; he was sure no good man would think it a heinous one, and no wise man would consider it as overwhelming. But he maintained, that so far from their being any national disgrace in negotiating at this moment, on the contrary, it would add to our dignity and character to propose peace at a period when we were elated by the successes of our arms, and the strength of our situation. He thought the country was called upon to make peace upon every principle of policy as well as necessity. Our overtures for peace at the moment of success must add to the dignity of our national character. Our successes were sufficient to recommend negotiation. An attempt to obtain peace would come doubly recommended in the hour of success from a country that had never negotiated but in the hour of distress. It was precisely at the two periods of greatest distress and alarm that we had evinced, or rather professed, a desire of peace. The noble Secretary of State seemed to deny this statement. He supposed he alluded to the first negotiation: he would prove from dates, from incontrovertible facts, that the first advance on our part, on that occasion, a letter, if he recollected, to some neutral Minister at Paris, was made at the moment that Jourdan was triumphantly marching into the heart of Germany, at the moment that we were expecting to hear from every dispatch the defeat of the Austrians, and the siege of Vienna. He was afterwards, it was true, defeated in a memorable engagement by the Archduke, and we had advanced too far in our negotiation to break it off with decency or honour; but he had no scruple in saying, that no plain man could read that famous negotiation, that trial of diplomatic dexterity, without being convinced, when he compared it with all that had happened, and had been said since, that the whole was insincere. With regard to Lisle, the distress of that moment, the situation into which the defection of our allies, the stoppage of the Bank, and innumerable other disasters had thrown us, were notorious to the world. He would not say, that at those periods sincere negotiation for peace would have been improper; he knew no period in which it would; but he contended, that they were the precise periods of the war in which it was most natural to

doubt our sincerity; they were certainly the precise periods in which negotiation was least likely to be attended with honour, advantage, or success. The present moment he considered, on the contrary, to be peculiarly favourable; for in addition to the weight which our successes and the co-operation of two powerful Monarchs would give to our negotiation, the particular situation of the French Government at this moment was highly favourable to such an attempt; it was critically situated, and the rejection of reasonable overtures to peace might be fatal to their present Rulers. In short, the situation we now stood in struck him as affording us the brightest prospects of treating with success, though the prospect of success, or at least of advantage from the prosecution of the war, was, to say no more of it, at least uncertain and problematical. He would ask those most averse to peace, whether they did not foresee, even in the successful prosecution of the war, that many embarrassments, many difficulties, might arise. He did not mean to insinuate any thing against the Emperor of Russia; he had no right to accuse him of ambition, or to say that his object in the present war was aggrandizement: but he begged leave to observe, that, however it might vary from the accidental and temporary views, wishes, or affections of the Monarch, there was a general and uniform system of politics for almost every Cabinet on the Continent, which, on the long run, was steadily and uniformly pursued. To prove that the system of the Cabinet of Petersburg had generally, and had lately, been that of aggrandizement, he need not appeal to any distant authority; he would appeal to the doctrines and opinions of our Ministers on the business of Oczakow: they were then conscious of that spirit of ambition in the Court of Petersburg; they were apprehensive of its consequences; and when it was to be a pretext for involving this country in war, Oczakow became a place of the last importance,—it was the key of the Mediterranean,—nay, it was the key of Lower Egypt, and was to conduct Russia to our Empire in the East!—If they had entertained such dread of Russian aggrandizement, how could they, with any consistency, enable her, as they now did, to put them into execution, with the connivance and assistance, even at the expence of Great Britain? He would not say that Russia had such designs; but she certainly had the opportunity: and how those who dreaded such effects from her aggrandizement could, with any prudence or consistency, rely on her not availing herself of that opportunity, he left to their ingenuity to explain. He knew not that Russia yet retained such views, but Corfu appeared to him likely to remain in his hands. He had procured to himself the title of Grand Master of Malta, and, what was remarkable, the

first attempt made by the Russians was on Ancona—a place, for the possession of which, his predecessor had negotiated near ten years ago. Was Malta, was Corfu, was Ancona, less a key to the treasures of the Mediterranean than Oczakow?—of which by the way, in addition to an immense territory in Poland, the Emperor Paul was now in possession. But if our Ministers had such confidence in that Court as not to suspect such designs, or if they had such inconsistency of principle in their system of policy as not to mind them, was Prussia, was Austria, were all the Princes of Germany equally confiding in the generosity of the Russian Cabinet? Did they view with indifference the probability of Russian ambition taking a westerly direction? Did they see without jealousy the introduction of troops belonging to a new and immense power, into Germany and Italy? It was not in the politics of Courts that it should be so; it was not in human prudence, or in human nature. Could Austria perceive, without jealousy, the glory of the war, perhaps the profit, ceded to Russia? It was impossible not to observe the marked difference in the manner we mentioned the two Powers: for his part, without any knowledge of military affairs, without any inclination to attend to the details, the horrible and disgusting details, of battles and engagements, it seemed to him, that to the Austrian valour as much, or even more, of the success of the campaign was due: yet we did not hear of their valour, of their zeal, of their magnanimity,—they were scarcely mentioned in the speech from the Throne. His Majesty's Ministers had a new and favourite actor; and it was evident to every plain man that they assigned an underpart to Austria in this revival of the piece. What was the conclusion to be drawn? It was, that they themselves imagined that a separate peace between Austria and France was probable;—and this consideration, more than any other, proved to him the necessity of negotiating while the confederacy was undivided. Austria, on a former occasion, notwithstanding the most solemn treaties with us, had been seduced by the cession of territory, of neutral territory, to conclude peace with the Republic. We had now no treaties to bind her; if we persisted in the war, a similar attention to her interest would lead her to act the same part; and we could not with truth reproach her with any breach of faith for so acting. But did any one imagine that France had not any thing to offer sufficient to induce her to accede to peace? Could she not secure to Austria the East of Italy? Was it not the ambition of the Court of Vienna to become the real possessors of the Roman empire, and, by the death of the Pope, the temporal power of the Papacy might be destroyed without even the appearance of injustice,

if any scruple about such appearance was felt at Vienna? With the North of Italy, with the territory of Rome and Venice, the dependent connections of Naples and Tuscany, and his immense acquisitions in Poland, the loss of the Netherlands would be amply compensated, and the security of their possessions from the French sufficiently preserved. The preference that the Cabinet of Vienna had uniformly shewn to their Italian possessions over her possessions in the Low Countries, was well known, and was, in truth, the effect of policy and good sense, rather than of caprice. France might secure her by gratifying her favourite ambition, that of establishing her dominion in Italy,—she might even grant her Piedmont and Turin, unless, by a peculiar morality, the Court of Vienna would disdain to conduct itself towards a Monarchy as it had on a late occasion towards the Republic of Venice. Was this speculation impossible? Was it improbable? And if Austria was at peace with France, where could we carry on these glorious, offensive operations, of which we make such a parade? Where could we employ the Russian force, unless, indeed, which God avert, they were introduced into England, or Ireland, for the purpose of defending us, or annoying the French? Such an event he deprecated as the last of evils; but it was one, he would confess with concern, that, if the war was continued, he thought neither impossible nor improbable. It might be said, that if we endeavoured to obtain peace, we were not sure the French would give it us: true, he could not tell what the disposition of the ruling power was; but he was persuaded, if the attempt was made, and our just terms were not acceded to, that the refusal would tend greatly to weaken the influence of that power: and he was yet more persuaded, that a blind perseverance in hostilities, without attempt at peace when successful, without a manly declaration of our object, was calculated, beyond any other system of conduct, to strengthen our enemy, and to render any future successes doubtful, and even improbable.—In saying this he was supported by the strongest argument—that of experience. He adverted to the situation of the French in 1793, and compared it with their situation now. They were then unsuccessful, in a state critical, if not dangerous; but driven by necessity, because they could neither expect nor hope for peace from their enemies, because we never evinced the slightest disposition in that hour of triumph to conciliate them; to have recourse to stupendous exertions, which, after enabling them to repel their powerful enemies; to resist with success and glory an unjust aggression on their territories, left them with armies so immense, that they could not provide for them, so well disciplined and so powerful that they became the successful in-

vaders of every neighbouring country, disturbed every neutral and neighbouring nation, and gratified their ambition with facility and impunity. If the situation of France and of the Allies were similar to that of 1793, and if the system we then pursued, had, as he contended it had, produced the mischiefs we were now endeavouring to repair, enabled the French, nay, almost obliged them, to invade every neighbouring country, friend or foe, and to become, as it were, the pest of Europe;—if these, he repeated, were the consequences of that system, could it be a question whether we were now in similar circumstances to have recourse to similar counsels?—But, alas! we were adopting the same system, we were displaying the same disposition, and without daring to avow, we were shewing that our wishes tended to the restoration of Royalty. Ministers had not the manliness to avow, they contented themselves with acknowledging that they prayed for the restoration of Royalty in France; by this half measure, this indecisive, this impolitic mode of proceeding, they laboured under the disadvantages of both systems of warfare, without reaping the advantages of either (if advantages there could be in the wild, the infatuated, the wicked project of restoring Royalty in France). They had admired the doctrines of Mr. Burke; their hearts had uniformly been with him. If Royalty was restored, they would be anxious to assume what they call the merit of the Restoration; but they had not the spirit, the consistency to avow it: they then made what was in itself ridiculously absurd and impracticable, yet more impracticable,—they alienated, they rendered desperate the Republican; but they neither gained, nor conciliated, the Royalist. Again, were they to renounce all such principles, to disavow all interference with the principles or government of France, they might expect among the variety of rulers, ever in a precarious situation, that they would find some who were willing to sacrifice much, perhaps even more than they were justified to their country in sacrificing, for the attainment of peace, in order to secure their power. But from the persuasion that restoration of Royalty was their real object, no Republican could trust to them, no Government of France would believe they were sincere in their desires for peace:—every Republican thought they aimed at overturning the Government; every Frenchman, who was indifferent to the form of the Government, suspected that they meant to dismember France; and then all were united by the bad policy of this country in suspicion, distrust, and hatred of England. He had seen the effect of this system; he deprecated the renewal of it; he conjured the House to recommend to the Throne to adopt, on this occasion, a system, the direct reverse of that which had produced

such melancholy effects, and which it was but too evident Ministers intended to persist in,—to have recourse in this moment of success, lest it should not recur, to conciliation and negotiation for peace. He therefore moved,

“ That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, to return our most humble thanks for the gracious communication of the two Treaties, which His Majesty, by the advice of his Ministers, has been pleased to enter into with His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias. To express our sincere satisfaction at perceiving that His Majesty has entered into no engagement with the Powers at war with France, which can lead to an interference with the internal affairs of that country, or preclude the conclusion of peace upon just and equitable terms with the French Republic.

“ That though considering the unparalleled sacrifices which His Majesty’s faithful subjects have already made, and that we are now engaged in the seventh year of an expensive and destructive war, from the calamities of which Russia has been hitherto exempt, we might have expected a more gratuitous exertion of the force of that powerful empire in the common cause; we shall nevertheless not fail to concur in such measures as the wisdom of Parliament may suggest for the purpose of meeting the additional and heavy expences which His Majesty’s engagements with the Emperor of all the Russias will necessarily occasion. To assure His Majesty that our anxious desire to maintain His Majesty’s personal honour inviolate, will induce us also to concur in a legislative provision, to enable His Majesty to fulfil the seventh article of the Treaty of the 22d of June 1799, which engages for the maintenance of a body of Russian troops within these kingdoms upon certain contingencies; but at the same time humbly to represent to His Majesty, that we have seen the stipulation above alluded to with the most serious concern and anxiety, as from the unprecedented manner in which it has been concluded, and in which it has been communicated to this House, there is too much reason to fear that those persons who have advised His Majesty to this measure, and whose conduct, in this instance, we cannot too severely condemn, entertain an opinion that a power is vested in the Crown of introducing and maintaining within these kingdoms a foreign force, without the consent or sanction of Parliament, and that we therefore feel ourselves particularly called upon to guard against the establishment of such a power, which is totally inconsistent with the ancient laws of this realm, and with the security of those indubitable rights which our ancestors asserted at the Revolution, and which we are determined to maintain.

“ Farther to exprefs to His Majesty, that in chearfully adopting fuch meafures as may be neceffary for a vigorous profecution of the war, we entertain a confident expectation that His Majesty will faithfully adhere to the pledge which he has fo folemnly given to this Country, and to Europe, in his Declaration of the 28th of October 1797, and humbly to fuggelt to His Majesty that the prefent moment feems peculiarly favourable to the adoption of moderate and pacific Counfels, when the improved fituation of affairs, and the fuccesses of His Majesty and his Allies, will give an additional grace and dignity to meafures of a conciliatory nature, and when the joint weight of the Allies, fincerely exerted in a fair and honourable negociation for peace, may be expected to produce the happieft effects. That it is far from the wifh or intention of this Houfe to reflect upon any of His Majesty’s Allies, or to excite fufpicions injurious to that fincere and cordial co-operation, which is no lefs effential to a fuccesful profecution of the war than to an effective negociation for peace. But we cannot conceal from ourfelves, nor will we, by any ill-timed flattery, diffemble from His Majesty the dangers which may refult from not endeavouring in time to fet on foot a joint negociation for peace, whilft the Confederacy againft France yet remains unbroken. The former events of the prefent war fufficiently prove, that Great Britain may be left alone to fupport the whole burden of the conteft, againft a formidable and irritated enemy, notwithstanding the facrifices fhe had made for the common intereft, and in defiance of the moft folemn engagements, not to conclude a peace but by common confent. We have not learnt that fuch Treaties at prefent exift with *all* the Powers now engaged in the war, nor have we feen fuch decifive and unequivocal fymptoms of a perfect union and concert in their views and objects as to f Silence the apprehenfions which we feel it our duty to ftate to His Majesty, that by new concessions, which France has fuch abundant means of making, without any diminution of her incorporated territory, fome of the Members of the Confederacy may be feparated from the common caufe, and Great Britain again lofe the ineflimable advantages which now offer of opening a negociation for peace, fupported by the whole weight, authority, and power of her prefent Allies. That whilft we are aware that it is neither practicable nor prudent to define the precise terms and conditions upon which peace muft ultimately be concluded, which we are fenfible muft alter with the circumftances of the war, and the different degrees of fecurity which different f Situations and the various interefts of the Powers engaged may require, we conceive nevertheless that it is not only perfectly practicable and fafe, but

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hat at this moment it would be attended with important advantages to state what are *now* the principles which, with the consent and concurrence of his Allies, His Majesty would be willing to adopt as the basis of immediate negociation; at least, we cannot forbear most earnestly to entreat His Majesty to disclaim such views as must render peace with the Republic of France utterly unattainable; and the suspicion of which cannot fail to unite the people of that country in a furious zeal and hatred against the British nation, as being engaged in the unjustifiable project of imposing upon them a government by force, or of dismembering their ancient empire. Recurring, therefore, to His Majesty's Royal Declaration of 1797, we humbly beseech His Majesty to reject all such counsels as would lead him to depart from the principles of moderation therein expressed, persuaded that some unequivocal proof of a sincere desire for the re-establishment of peace, on just and reasonable grounds, would afford the best hope of producing a correspondent disposition in the enemy, or, if contrary to that just expectation, from ambition, from pride, or from a spirit of revenge, such honourable overtures as His Majesty might be advised to make should be rejected, that it would produce the double advantage of destroying the confidence of the people of France in their present rulers, and of increasing the zeal, energy, and spirit of all descriptions of His Majesty's faithful subjects, in the necessary prosecution of just and unavoidable hostilities."

Lord GRENVILLE said, that after having attended to all the speech and the motion of the noble Lord, he thought it would be sufficient for him to remark the tendency of the whole, which was, to attempt to prevent the farther prosecution of the war which had been deemed, and repeatedly pronounced in that House to be necessary to the preservation of His Majesty's Crown, and to the maintenance of the Religion and Liberties of the Country. To persist in such a line of conduct, was unprecedented, and he doubted not but it would appear to their Lordships to be injurious to their dignity. Nothing would prove more injurious to the best interests of the country, and to the sound practice of the Constitution, than to listen to representations such as these, brought forward from time to time. He must take the liberty of adding, that this sort of representation must be the result of great singularity of opinion; and till he heard it avowed in that House, he could hardly have supposed that it would have found any one person to maintain and avow it. With regard to the argument which had that evening been brought forward, he confessed he hardly knew how to argue with a man who thought this a fit moment to recommend to His Majesty to recommence negociations for peace: In support of this, what had their

Lordships heard but mere common-place declamation on the miseries of war ; the same topics had been adduced, which had been over and over again urged, and as often refuted, respecting the object and origin of the war—doubts entertained of the sincerity of our allies, &c. But he confessed, that to him it appeared that arguments would be lost upon that man who persisted in maintaining, in the present day, that in the year 1793 the allies were engaged in an unjust war against France. Their Lordships had seen a period since the commencement of the war, when Great Britain had been deserted by her allies, and when France, presuming upon this circumstance, would have dictated a base and dishonourable peace to this country ; but they had seen also, that the people of this country dared at the same time to say, that they were ready to convince France, and to shew to the whole world, their determination to run every hazard in defending their laws and liberties. And now, when we stand in a much better situation, shall we not avail ourselves of that situation, whilst it lasts, against an enemy who never attempted to dissemble its own object to be the total subversion of the Constitution, Independence, and Prosperity of this Country ? His Lordship said, he did not think it necessary to say much on the subjects treated of by the noble Lord in the latter part of his speech, if he had not felt himself desirous of avoiding the suspicion of disrespect towards the noble mover of the Address, if he had preserved an entire silence on that part of his argument.

In speaking of the treaty with Russia, the noble Lord (Holland) had objected to the additional treaty for subsidizing 17,000 Russians ; but was not this very circumstance a proof—not surely of less zeal in Russia, but of its sincerity, and the ardent and additional zeal on the part of that Power to resist the aggressions of the common enemy ? The noble Lord had also objected to the terms of the agreement with Russia ; but was the noble Lord ignorant that the chief force of this country consisted in her finances, and that of Russia in men ; and that therefore if it were necessary to pursue a vigorous war, it must be by this country's furnishing what it had in her power, and by Russia furnishing men, which she had in a much greater proportion ? With respect to the pecuniary engagements entered into with Russia, the noble Lord would find them in this instance to be considerably less in proportion to that entered into by Prussia.

Nothing could afford a better proof of the heart-felt zeal of the Emperor of Russia to exert himself in the vigorous prosecution of the war, and in a manner peculiarly acceptable to this country, than his engaging to employ part of his own ships (originally intended for

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another destination) in the conveyance of his troops to Holland. If the Emperor had not thus engaged to appropriate part of his naval force to this service, the transport of these troops would have cost this country double the sum which will be occasioned by the provisions of this treaty.

His Lordship then adverted to the objection of the noble Lord (Holland), to that provision in the Russian Treaty with respect to the wintering the Russian troops in His Majesty's dominions in case of necessity ; and observed, that it was perfectly foreign to the present occasion to quote the speech of the late Speaker, Onslow, in a way to shew his disapprobation of the measure of landing foreign troops in England. He said, he would advert, not to the speech of any individual, however respectable, but he would take the Law and the Constitution of England for his guide. Supposing, said his Lordship, the law to be that the King cannot bring any foreign troops into this country without the previous consent of Parliament, there was nothing in the present treaty which contravened that restriction. The King was constitutionally considered as the representative of the whole Council and Authority of the Nation ; and if it were lawful for him to engage by treaty that he will furnish money to a foreign Prince, why may he not also engage that in case of necessity, they shall be admitted to land in some part of his dominions ? But as by such a stipulation in the former instance no man could pretend that the King could dispose of the revenues of this country without the consent of Parliament, so with respect to the admission of foreign troops, the King forms such a stipulation upon the supposition of the consent of Parliament ; both engagements are supposed to be entered into by the actual consent of Parliament ; they are therefore to be submitted to Parliament after the first meeting from the time of the treaty being made, and it is for Parliament to consider whether it will or will not fulfil these engagements, or whether it will give its consent to the uncommon determination of rejecting the conditions of the Treaty ; and the noble Lord must perceive that it was a fallacy to argue from an engagement to land troops in certain events, as if those troops were actually landed without consent of Parliament. Nothing had been done in the present instance, but what was consistent with precedent and the spirit of the Constitution. His Majesty had engaged in a treaty with Russia, interesting to both countries ; the Emperor, from his zealous desire of co-operation, had agreed to furnish the troops wanted ; but if the enterprise should not eventually succeed, or the auxiliary troops be withdrawn from Holland, what then ? Were the Russian troops to be left at all hazard, to be tossed about on the

feas, at a period possibly when the navigation of the Baltic might be interrupted? Should an application to winter these troops in some parts of the King's dominions be made, the opinion of the King's advisers would then be seen by their conduct, which would become a fair subject of discussion; and were that advice to be in favour of the temporary introduction of foreign troops, it would then be a fit subject of inquiry how far their advice was consistent with the principles and practice of the Constitution. With regard to the declaration of Russia against Spain, it was in the highest degree unreasonable in the noble Lord to make His Majesty's Ministers any way responsible for the language of that proclamation. His Lordship said, he was sorry to have troubled the House so long with such observations, and must conclude with giving his decided negative to the motion for an Address.

Lord HOLLAND rose to explain. His Lordship said he should not have been desirous of claiming the indulgence usually granted by their Lordships to persons who came forward with motions in that House, if the noble Secretary of State had not rendered it absolutely necessary, by the singular manner in which he had treated his motion, and the yet more singular manner in which he had mistated his arguments. When first he had the power of taking part in their Lordships' debates, he had been often surprized, and, he would own, a little irritated, at what he then thought continual and gross misrepresentations of his arguments; but after more experience of the noble Lord, he must acquit him of any intentional misrepresentation; he really did believe those mistatements were not the effect of design, but without intending to convey any disrespect to the eloquence and abilities of the noble Lord, for which he felt due deference, it was sincerely his opinion, that an apprehension of another man's arguments was not among the most shining of his qualifications. The noble Secretary had begun his reply with declaring, that he did not think it necessary to say much on the subjects treated of by him (Lord Holland) in the latter part of his speech; and after a few general observations, the noble Secretary had declared he should not have said even the little he had urged upon the topics in question, had he not felt himself anxious to avoid the suspicion of illiberality and disrespect towards the noble mover of the Address, in case he had preserved an entire silence with regard to that part of his speech. Lord Holland assured the noble Lord, that if he had preserved his threatened silence, he should have felt neither offended nor affronted; and he did not wonder that the noble Lord had felt an inclination to be silent, since, in point of prudence, for the sake of his own cause, he would have done well to have pre-

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served an entire silence; for in the course of his speech, what was not mistatement, were strong and forcible reasons for adopting the motion, against which he was contending. The noble Secretary of State had said, that he had grounded his motion, and used arguments to prove, that the war was a war of aggression, and that with a man who held such opinions, and supported such doctrines, he could not argue. He begged leave to observe, that though when he mentioned that period, he had probably called it, as he had always thought it, a war of aggression, that so far, however, from arguing or laying any stress on that point on the present occasion, its being a war of aggression or a war of defence, was a matter quite indifferent to his argument. He would even suppose that he agreed with the noble Secretary, that he thought it in its commencement (though he certainly did not) a just and necessary war, how when that was accorded, how would his argument stand? Precisely as he had put it, and as the noble Secretary had left it. The French, he had said, were in the same situation as they were at the end of the first campaign, the autumn of 1793, (and by the bye they were then in a much more unfavourable situation). The question on this hypothesis that he had put was simply this—If they are in such a state, what should be our conduct? The same or the reverse of that we followed in 1793 and 1794?—To which he had answered, the reverse, precisely the reverse, because he had contended that it was by the conduct we then pursued that they had been roused to exertions which had produced their immense and well-disciplined armies, to which circumstances all their subsequent power and ambition, and all our calamities and the danger of Europe, were to be attributed. He had therefore deprecated the same line of conduct, because he had dreaded from it the same, or similar, effects, and he had recommended the reverse—negociation. His argument might be right, or it might be wrong, but it had not been founded on the original aggression of the war; and the noble Lord's remark and declamation on that subject were therefore no answer to it, and utterly irrelevant and inapplicable.

In alluding to the arguments he had adduced to prove that the defection of our Allies was a probable event, the noble Lord, he knew not why, had furnished the House with the strongest, the most unanswerable argument for the adoption of the motion. He had alluded, with a species of triumph and exultation, to the period when we were left alone in that war.—“We have seen,” exclaimed the noble Lord, “the period when we stood alone in this awful contest.” We had, indeed, seen that period, and it was to prevent our seeing it again that he had made the motion; it was to

prevent the recurrence of that dangerous and alarming crisis that he had conjured the House to recommend negotiation while our Allies were with us, and our situation comparatively fortunate. But had the noble Lord, in referring to that period, forgotten that he had also seen a negotiation, a fruitless and abortive negotiation? Had he forgotten that we had heard him and his colleagues lower the loftiness of their language in that moment of alarm and distress? Or did the noble Lord mean to argue, that because we had failed to procure peace in the moment of calamity, and when left alone, we should in good policy defer all thoughts of negotiation when successful and co-operating with powerful Allies?—These very facts, the experience of the past, and above all the very period the noble Lord was so good as to call to his recollection, spoke strongly to the understanding of every man, and proved, beyond dispute, with how much more probability of success, and at any rate with how much more grace and dignity, we could now negotiate, than at such a period, should it again, as was but too probable, unfortunately recur.

He had then complained that the motion was chiefly grounded on the calamities incident to all wars, and he had vehemently deprecated such arguments. That the noble Lord should feel a certain foreboding and uneasiness, when the horrors of war were accidentally brought to his mind, was extremely natural; in his situation he should feel the same, or, perhaps, more; but so far from resting his motion entirely on that consideration, the House would recollect that he had expressly stated, when complaining of the prejudice felt against the advocates of peace, that had he nothing else to alledge in his defence, an enumeration of the horrors of war would be sufficient to plead his excuse at least, before God and Man; but that on the present occasion it was of the utmost possible success that could be expected from a continuance of the war, balanced against the probable mischiefs that might ensue if the present favourable opportunity for negotiation were not embraced, that he had been induced to move the Address. But what was most extraordinary in the noble Secretary of State's speech, was a declaration that any attempt like the present to interrupt the Executive Government in the conduct of a war, was to interfere with His Majesty's privileges and prerogative in a manner wholly unprecedented and new in the practice of the Constitution; a doctrine which Lord Holland said was far from true, as there were numberless instances on record to the contrary. He had then in his eye a noble Duke (the Duke of Portland) who had, during the American war, in repeated instances, come forward with those with whom the noble Duke then acted, with motions

similar in effect to that before the House. It might perhaps be said, that what the noble Duke and his friends had done had been merely to move amendments in addresses in reply to His Majesty's speech from the Throne. If there was any material distinction in the two cases, his Lordship said, he would leave it to the noble Secretary of State, who was so great a master of distinctions, to explain. It was an essential privilege of Parliament for any Member of either House to move such an Address as he had that day moved, and therefore his Lordship declared, as often as he felt it his duty to exert his undoubted privilege in that respect, he would not fail to exert it.

With regard to the treaties on the table, the noble Secretary of State had not, he said, done his argument any thing like justice. He had called upon him to deny, that Finance was the great strength of this country, and men the great strength of Russia? Undoubtedly he could not deny it; but, upon that principle, why were 25,000 British troops necessary to be sent to Holland? it made our contingent disproportionably large. In another part of his speech the noble Lord had adduced, in support of the payment of the freight, the geographical situation of Russia, and he would adduce our geographical situation to prove the enormous disproportion of our contingent to the war. Putting our navy out of the question, the vicinity of our coasts to France, from which Russia was fortunately remote, rendered a large force necessary; and that force, or at least the increase of that force, he contended he had a right to call a part of our contingent to the war: we paid therefore for 62,000 Russians; we had embarked near 25,000 British; we were forced to maintain immense armies here, in Ireland, and in our European garrisons, exclusive of our colonial possessions: and who would maintain that our contingent to the war, compared with that of our ally, was not disproportionably large? The noble Secretary of State had seemed to understand what he had said about the expence of the freight of the Russian troops, as if he had argued it as a proof of the want of zeal and magnanimity of the Emperor of Russia; but in comparing the reasonableness of the terms demanded by the two Courts of Berlin and Petersburg, he had put the amount of the expence of freight wholly out of the question; but when he came to balance their comparative amount in point of expence to this country, he certainly did take the charge for freight into the calculation: nor should he have calculated fairly if he had not done so. The noble Secretary had said, he had computed the comparative expence incorrectly. Possibly he might have done so; but he

wished he had pointed out to him how, and where. In what the noble Secretary had said, in reference to the article enabling His Majesty, in certain cases, to receive the Russians into this kingdom, he differed totally. He had contended, and he was satisfied he had contended on constitutional ground, that it was not lawful for His Majesty to bring foreign troops into this kingdom, without having either the previous consent or subsequent approbation of Parliament. The noble Secretary had observed, that to suppose an engagement to land troops without the approbation of Parliament, and the so landing troops was the same thing, was a fallacy; it undoubtedly was one, but one that he had not committed: but to suppose, that an accusation for having engaged to such a purpose, and an accusation for not having taken the first opportunity of communicating it to Parliament, and of procuring a sanction for it, was the same accusation, was also a fallacy, and one which he humbly apprehended the noble Secretary had committed. The noble Secretary had complained of the precedent of 1641; but he could not agree that precedents of those times were necessarily bad. In that House, precedents of 1641 had been repeatedly quoted and relied on; and, as to the declaration of the noble Secretary, that the Resolution of 1641 was to prevent the King from introducing foreign troops to enable him to make war against the Rights and Liberties of the People, that very observation, his Lordship said, made the precedent a good precedent. It would be silly indeed, at this time, to discuss the question, whether Charles the First was justified in levying forces to make war against his Parliament, or his Parliament in making war upon their King; but whichever was blameable in that quarrel, an attempt to prevent foreign troops being employed to settle it must be justifiable; it came home to every British breast, and no man could deny, if the resolution was adopted with the views the noble Secretary had stated, that its object was good, and the doctrine contained in it constitutional. All the reasoning of the noble Secretary, in defence of the article in the Convention by which His Majesty engages, in a certain incidental circumstance, to receive the Russian forces into this kingdom, served, Lord Holland said, to furnish him with additional arguments against the expedition to Holland; for as the introduction of foreign troops was an evil *per se*, if it was rendered necessary by this expedition, it was an additional inconvenience attending the expedition—Because he had quoted a declaration of Russia, it had been said, that he wished to make Ministers responsible for the declaration of a foreign power. He had expressed no such wish—he had reasoned in no such manner: the declaration

avowed, that it was the resolution of *Russia and her Allies* to destroy the iniquitous power that ruled France. He had called on Ministers to state distinctly if such were their views; and he had contended, that if they were not, it was necessary for this country to disavow them, in order not to be implicated in their consequences.

The question was then put, and the House divided—

Contents, 2; Not Contents, 15.

The contents were, Lord Holland and Lord King.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, October 11.

At four o'clock Mr. Speaker counted the House, and there being but 38 Members present, an adjournment took place of course. The House was ordered to meet at half past eleven on the following day.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Saturday, October 12.

The Lords met at half past eleven o'clock, when the Lords Commissioners (the Lord Chancellor, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Duke of Portland) being seated in their robes, a message was sent requiring the immediate attendance of the Commons; and Mr. Speaker, accompanied by the Members, having attended accordingly, His Majesty's Commission was read, when several bills received the royal assent.

After which the LORD CHANCELLOR declared, that it was His Majesty's pleasure that the adjournment of Parliament was to take place till Tuesday the 21st of January next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Saturday, October 12.

Mr. Speaker took the chair before twelve.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, it had been usual in the early part of a session to limit the time of receiving private petitions. He therefore moved, that the House do not receive any petition for a private bill after the 8th of March next.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he had no objection to this limitation, but a notice had been communicated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of an adjournment of the House; he should be glad to know when that adjournment should take place, and to what day?

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, it was perfectly well understood that an intimation would come from His Majesty upon that subject, but that was a subject of which there could be no parliamentary notice before its arrival.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that by this mode of proceeding a great inequality was created between the Members of the House of Commons with regard to information when the House was to carry on its business. Some persons had advantages which others had not; for instance, yesterday at four o'clock there happened not to be forty Members present, consequently there could be no House, an adjournment took place to the usual hour, which was this morning ten o'clock; that, however, was the mere nominal, formal hour; the real time every Member must have conceived to be the usual hour at which the House actually met. It was merely owing to the personal civility of the Speaker that he learnt the House was actually to meet this day at eleven in the morning. This was quite out of the usual course of modern parliamentary practice, and it was in the power of a Minister to take very unfair advantages in this way; since his own friends might have intimation and others might not, of business being to be transacted before the usual hour. Not that he apprehended that any improper proceeding would take place in the House, because he knew the Speaker would take care that the rules of the House, when met, should not be violated; and he trusted the Minister would take no advantage in this particular.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that he should act according to the sense he entertained of the duty of a Member of Parliament, and the honourable gentleman would of course act according to his own sense of his duty.

Here Mr. Speaker was summoned up to the House of Peers to hear the Commission read for giving the royal assent to various bills.

Mr. Speaker went up accordingly, and having returned, the question that no private petition should be received after the 8th of March next, was put and carried.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that in obedience to His Majesty's pleasure intimated to the two Houses, this House do now adjourn to the 21st of January next.

Mr. SPEAKER said, that before he put this question of adjournment, he thought it right to advert to what had been said on receiving private bills. He did not understand that the honourable gentleman's (Mr. Tierney's) observations applied to the nature of that proceeding. That which was now before the House, the question of adjournment, was not a novel proceeding, there were many instances on the journals in which it appeared the House had adjourned conformably to His Majesty's pleasure. When the rumour reached him of a probability that an intimation would come, signifying His Majesty's pleasure, at an hour on which the House did not usually sit, he searched the journals, and he did hope to find there a precedent for not putting the question immediately. If there had been an interval of adjournment from the time of His Majesty's intimation being given to the usual hour of meeting, he should have taken the liberty of recommending a suspension of this motion for adjournment until the time of the day at which the House proceeded usually to public business. But upon searching he found no proceeding to justify him in making such recommendation. All the instances on the journals were of this description: His Majesty's pleasure was signified by the motion, and the House accordingly adjourned immediately. That being the case, he had no alternative.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that as there was no order of the day remaining, it appeared to him that he was consulting the convenience of Members by making this motion, when, now, there being as full an attendance as was usual at the commencement of public business at the usual hour. It had been usual to come forward with an intimation of His Majesty's desire that public business should be proceeded in, and that was the time when the session usually commenced. The adjournment took place when all the business for which Parliament was called together was at an end. Considering, therefore, that there was nothing likely to come forward, and that this was now so well understood; and, considering that this pro-

posed adjournment was nothing more than what His Majesty could direct by his prerogative under the title of a prorogation; considering also that there was no inconvenience whatever to the public; and considering that he was doing that which was most convenient to the Members of that House, he thought he was taking the best course that could be taken in the motion which he made. Hereafter it would be proper to take all the best means that could be taken to procure a full attendance when public business came forward.

Mr. TIERNEY thanked the Speaker for the politeness with which he informed him that the House was to meet at the hour of eleven this morning. He said, he had had the misfortune not to be distinctly understood; he never meant to say, there was no precedent for the House adjourning, in compliance to His Majesty's pleasure, and that immediately after that was intimated. On neither of these points did he mean to trouble the House. He meant to observe on the very particular circumstances of the case, as it stood this day. He would state the facts which contained all the arguments. He could not be heard this day if forty Members had not been present; the Speaker must have adjourned the House until Monday morning at ten o'clock, as he did yesterday; the usual hour, however, for the meeting of the House, must have been understood to be four o'clock. There had been an instance of the House meeting at eleven o'clock in the morning beyond a doubt; but had the House done so, without the Speaker previously announcing that he should take the chair at eleven? When the House attended His Majesty to St. Paul's, the Speaker announced that he should attend at eleven in the morning. All the Members of the House being supposed to be present, must also be supposed to know that circumstance, and therefore had full notice; but farther than this, the practice of the House did not go, nor could go, consistently with the rules of Parliament; for here, speaking parliamentary language, no Member of the House could know that the House was now sitting. No Member could know, except from the personal civility of the Speaker, that his duty called him to attend this morning. No precedent could apply to the case now before the House, for it was a meeting at an unusual hour, of which it was impossible to give any regular notice, because there was no House yesterday to receive a notice. In truth he might say, that public business was never transacted on a Saturday without special notice, but that he waved; though he wished to know, whether in the Speaker's opinion, Members of Parliament could regularly know that the House would sit

this morning at eleven, and whether he should proceed to business without notice to attend to such proceeding?

Mr. SPEAKER said, that whether Members did know or not that the House would meet, was a thing impossible for him to conjecture: he hoped they did know it: it was his duty to attend: he received an intimation that a Commission to give the royal assent to certain bills would take place at twelve this day. There had been no public intimation of the matter. It was conveyed to him from the Speaker of the House of Lords, by means of the black rod. That was sufficient for him to attend. He did so. He likewise heard His Majesty's pleasure announced that Parliament should adjourn to a future day. He wished that the proceedings of the House should have taken place at the usual hour of sitting; but he found no precedent to govern this case. The motion for adjournment had been made, and the question must be put upon it. He was not to judge on the propriety of a motion, but to put it to the House; he had no alternative, nor had he any as to his attendance; he received an intimation to attend, and it was his duty to attend.

Mr. TIERNEY disclaimed all idea of imputing the most distant degree of impropriety of conduct to the Speaker. He knew it was his duty to attend; and what was his duty every body knew he would perform properly. He knew also that now the motion was made, the Speaker must put the question—but what he complained of was, that this was inconsistent with the ordinary practice of Parliament. Upon a suggestion of impropriety of a motion, he should hope no Member would hesitate to withdraw it; if that was not acceded to, he must ask the Chair, whether or not this proceeding was unusual and improper?

Mr. SPEAKER said, he was sure the House would not think that this was a proper question to be put to him. The honourable gentleman imagined that this was an unprecedented motion; he could only answer that, by saying, that whenever a motion was made, he was bound to put a question upon it; and whether the motion was one that ought to be adopted or rejected, was a thing for the House to decide. It certainly was not usual—he was aware of only once in his experience—meeting at this hour. He had said already, he had found no case that governed this; he knew of no instance of any delay between the intimation of His Majesty's pleasure and a motion for adjournment, and he thought that sufficient to entitle him to say, at least, that he should not be justified in recommending a different practice.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, it must be obvious that these objections were calculated to make some impression on others unfavourable to the mode now proposed to be adopted; but whatever importance the honourable Member who made them was pleased to attach to them, he could not help saying, they appeared to him to be as captious as any he had ever known made in that House. The adjournment took place yesterday, because a sufficient number did not attend to make a House. What was the consequence? The right of the King's message he supposed was not disputed; nor did the honourable gentleman call in question the right of putting the question when delivered to the Chair. Why then, what was the objection that was made? It was, that, contrary to all custom and precedent, the Speaker should delay, or the mover should withdraw, the consideration of the question until some future hour. Was there any reason for this? He took upon him to say, there was none. The House knew there was not now before it one article of business. There was nothing in reality to be done; nothing was put off; therefore there was no surprise upon any body. These things were well known; and therefore he maintained, there was no inconvenience in what was now proposed. How did the honourable Member consult the convenience of the House? If there was to be no business at four o'clock, what was the reason why the House should not do now what they might do at four o'clock, namely, to adjourn, because no business was before them?—Suppose the honourable gentleman's objection was to prevail, the probability would be, that at four o'clock not forty Members would attend; the consequence would be, that the Speaker would be obliged to adjourn, and come down the next day, and so from day to day for three months to come, he might be obliged to attend; for as it was well known there was no business, it was not likely that forty Members would be present at any one time to enable him to adjourn, except from day to day. He did not like to speak harshly or disrespectfully of any Member; but this objection had really nothing in the world in it, except public inconvenience.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that as to the word "Captious," or any other peevish word, he had nothing to say, but that he was too much accustomed to epithets of this kind being applied to what he said in the House, to be affected by them; but it was not sufficient to call it so, it must be proved to be so, before it could affect him. The right honourable gentleman said, he was of opinion, that if an adjournment took place, forty Members would not assemble at four o'clock: why Members of Parliament would not attend their duty,

the right honourable gentleman knew best. But he said there was now no business before the House. Yesterday there was before the House what, in former times, was considered as business of very considerable magnitude—a Committee of Supply, and that right honourable gentleman would allow a very young Member of Parliament to tell a very old one, that if the House had met yesterday the order of the day must either have been discharged or postponed, and that it might have been made to stand for this day. It was too much for him, as a plain Member of Parliament, to say it was the intention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer not to bring forward the Supply, although the right honourable gentleman might know it, for so he must, before he said there was no business before the House. But the time of proceeding was what he objected to—Why not adjourn until Monday?—one day could make but little difference—there would be no insult offered to His Majesty on his message; and it would afford Members time to come to a determination, whether the adjournment now proposed, or any adjournment, should take place. It was said, that His Majesty might, by virtue of his prerogative, prorogue Parliament to the time now proposed—he knew it; but there was a material difference between prorogation and adjournment: the one was the pure act of Royal prerogative, the other was the act of the House itself. Besides, he could conceive many acts that a Minister might propose and persuade the House to agree to, but which the House might not like to give him the discretion of, nor might he like the responsibility of, for three months. But how stood the case with regard to supply? The Minister had now under a vote of credit and supply upwards of five millions, the application of which was not specified by Parliament. Now, speaking Parliamentary language, without any regard to confidence in persons, what security was there that this large sum of money would be duly applied?—Here Mr. Tierney went over the calculations he made on a former day, to shew that upwards of five millions would be under the disposal of Ministers for three months, if this adjournment took place; for that Parliament had really made no appropriation of the money; and then said, he therefore thought that there should not be an adjournment of above a fortnight or three weeks. It was true that Ministers said there was no more business; that was to say, *they* had no more business; but how did they know that no Member of Parliament had any business to bring forward for three months? For his part, viewing public affairs as he did, he thought that public Parliamentary business ought to be considered now as only commencing, instead of concluding. Upon the subject of forty Members not being present

at four o'clock, he really feared there was hardly that number now; he had not counted them, but there was not many above forty he was confident.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that as the honourable Member objected to the proceeding on account of their not being forty Members present, he must beg that the Speaker might count the House.

Strangers were then excluded, but we understood that

Mr. TIERNEY moved, That the adjournment should be for one month only; and on a division there appeared—Noes, 38; Ayes, 0; Mr. Tierney and Mr Jones, the tellers for the Ayes, and the tellers for the Noes not voting, so that there appeared to be forty-two Members in the House. Mr. Tierney next moved, that the debate be adjourned to four o'clock. The division was the same; after which the original motion was carried by the like majority; and the House accordingly adjourned till the 21st of January following.

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COPY OF REPORT

OF THE

LORDS COMMISSIONERS of the ADMIRALTY, to the LORDS of HIS MAJESTY's Most Honourable PRIVY COUNCIL; being the Proceedings had by the said Lords Commissioners respecting the Matters stated in Reports of the Select Committee of Finance, so far as they relate to the Office of Admiralty.

Ordered to be printed 4th October 1799.

To the LORDS of the COMMITTEE of HIS MAJESTY's Most Honourable PRIVY COUNCIL.

YOUR Lordships having been pleased, by your order, dated the 12th January 1792, to refer unto us the Report of the Commissioners appointed by an act, passed in the 25th year of His Majesty's reign, intituled, "An Act for appointing Commissioners to inquire into the Fees, Gratuities, Perquisites, and Emoluments, which are or have been lately received in the several Public Offices therein mentioned, to examine into any Abuses which may exist in the same, and to report such Observations as shall occur to them, for the better conducting and managing the Business transacted in the said Offices," viz.

Upon the Office of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty,

Upon the Office of the Treasurer of the Navy,

Upon the Office of the Commissioners of the Navy,

Upon the Dock Yards,

Upon the Office for the Care of Sick and Wounded Seamen,

Upon the Victualling Office,

And,

Upon the Naval and Victualling Departments established at Foreign and distant Parts;—

—in order that we should consider of the regulations proposed and all matters contained therein, and report what part of the proposed regulations we may approve as fit to be adopted and carried into

execution; and if there should be any of the proposed regulations to which we may object, to state our objections and the grounds thereof:—

WE have, in obedience to your Lordships' commands, taken under our consideration the Report of the said Commissioners upon the first-mentioned office; and, after weighing all the circumstances stated by them, do report our opinion thereon to your Lordships as follows:

Proposal of the Commissioners.

1st. That the Secretaries, Clerks, and other officers, should receive fixed salaries in lieu of fees, gratuities, perquisites, allowances, or other emoluments whatsoever, and be paid out of the money voted for the ordinary of the Navy.

That on account of the unremitting attendance required and extraordinary trust reposed in the Secretaries, their salaries ought to be,

1st Secretary, 2,000l. a year.

2d Secretary, 1,200l.

clear of all deductions; with apartments in the Admiralty for the residence of the first Secretary; and to be considered as full compensations for their services in the Naval and Marine departments, in the time of war as well as peace.

Report.

— As an opinion seems to prevail that this principle should be extended to all the departments of Government, we see no objection to its being established in this; at the same time we cannot help observing, that it appears doubtful whether the public business of the offices, where fees have been discontinued to be received by the officers executing such business, has been carried on with the same facility and dispatch as under the former system.

Upon reference to the account annexed to the Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry, it will appear that the salary proposed by them for the first Secretary, viz. 2,000l. per annum, in time of war as well as peace, is even less than his actual receipts in a year of profound peace; which salary, in our opinion, is not sufficient to compensate the services of a person holding a situation of so much responsibility, and in whom such unlimited confidence must necessa-

*Proposal of the Commissioners.**Report.*

2d. That the salary of the Chief Clerk ought to be 800l. a year.

3d. That the other Clerks ought to be arranged into three classes, senior, junior, and extra.

rily be placed. We therefore propose, that the salary of the first Secretary should be fixed at 3,000l. per annum, and in consideration of the additional business to be executed by him in time of war, a farther salary of 1,000l. per annum.

That the second Secretary should have a fixed salary of 1,500l. per annum in time of peace, and an additional salary of 500l. in time of war.

— We are of opinion, that the sum proposed by the Commissioners is sufficient as a permanent salary.

As the Chief Clerk, who has hitherto been entrusted with the receipt of fees, and payment of contingencies, has not found it incompatible with his other duties, we see no necessity for appointing any other person for the execution of that separate duty; and do therefore propose, that in order to compensate him for the additional trouble which must attach to his situation in time of war, he should also be allowed to receive the salary proposed to be annexed to the office of Receiver of Fees, and Paymaster of Contingencies, viz. 150l. a year; but that this allowance should be discontinued to him in peace.

— The present establishment of the office is nearly adapted to the proposed regula-

Proposal of the Commissioners.

The six Clerks at present upon the establishment, to be stiled Senior.

Eight of the extra Clerks to be added to the establishment, and stiled Junior (one of whom should be attached to each of the Secretaries), and the three youngest to remain extra, but to succeed to vacancies on the establishment according to seniority or merit.

That considering the confidence necessarily reposed in the said Clerks, which they conceive to be of a superior nature, and more important to the State than what arises from pecuniary trust, their salaries ought to be as follows:

	£.
1st Senior Clerk - - -	400
2d - - - - -	350
3d - - - - -	300
4th - - - - -	250
5th - - - - -	200
6th - - - - -	150
Receiver of Fees, and Pay-	
master of Contingencies	150

Report.

tion, the business of which is and has always been divided into separate and distinct departments.

With respect to the succession of extra clerks to vacancies on the establishment, it does not appear to us to be proper, that any fixed rule should be laid down, as due attention will always be paid to the services of persons who have been in that capacity, if their conduct should merit approbation. The junior Clerks on the establishment, if competent to higher situations, will rise in succession as matter of course.

— We are of opinion, that the salaries proposed by the Commissioners of Inquiry, are not sufficient to compensate the Clerks for their services, nor is the number stated in the Report sufficient to execute the various branches of business into which the important concerns of this office are necessarily divided; we therefore humbly propose, that this part of the establishment should consist of the number of persons, with the respective salaries hereafter mentioned, viz.:

	£.
1 Senior Clerk - - -	500
1 - - - - -	450
2 - - 400l. each -	800
1 - - - - -	350
1 - - - - -	300
1 Marine Department	300
1 Junior Clerk - - -	250
2 - - - 200l. each	400

Proposal of the Commissioners.

	£.
3 first Junior Clerks 120l.	
each - - - - -	360
5 other Junior Clerks 100l.	500
French and Spanish Translator an additional salary of 50l. - - - - -	150
3 Extra Clerks 90l. each	270
1 Marine Clerk - - -	200
2d ditto - - - - -	120
Translator - - - - -	100

Report.

	£.
3 - - - 175l. -	525
4 - - - 150l. -	600
1 Marine Clerk -	150
2 Extra Clerks 100l. each	200
4 - - - 90l. -	360
Translator - - -	100

To which should be added,

Secretary to the first Lord 300

To apply to the salaries of all the rest of the established Clerks, the principle upon which the salaries of the Secretaries and Chief Clerk are proposed to be placed, we beg leave to recommend that each of their salaries respectively should, during time of war, be increased in the proportion of one-fifth part, to compensate them for the additional trouble and attendance which must be required of them under such circumstances.

These, and all other salaries under the new establishment, to be paid free of all deductions, and to be considered to be in lieu of all other emoluments whatsoever for the execution of the duties of their respective stations.

Some reduction of the before-mentioned establishment will consequently take place on the return of peace; but as the extent of such reduction must depend on the amount of the force that may then be thought proper for the peace establishment, it is difficult for us to form an estimate. We shall, however, upon such

Proposal of the Commissioners.

4th. The emoluments received by the Marine department, from the clothier and tradesmen, being subject to abuse, ought to be abolished.

The first Marine Clerk ought not to be Chief Clerk to the Paymaster of Marines, whose accounts he in some degree checks.

He is purser of a ship in ordinary, the duty of which he executes by deputy.

He also acts as Agent to Marine Officers; which is considered to be highly improper, and subject to abuse; and that no officer in a public department ought to act as Agent to any person in the service of Government.

Report.

change of circumstances, think it our duty to discharge all persons that may not be necessary to be retained.

— We entirely agree in opinion with the Commissioners on this subject; and as the supply of Marine cloathing and accoutrements is now furnished by contract with the Navy Board, no abuse of the like nature can again exist in this department.

The first Marine Clerk has not for many years held any employment under the Paymaster.

Upon this observation we have to remark, that the present Marine Clerk is not a purser: but we cannot help observing, that if the duties of that, or any other situation he might hold, did not interfere with, or lead to a neglect of his duties in this office, we can see no reason why he, or any other meritorious servant of the Public, should be precluded from the advantage of any such additional reward for his services.

We agree with the Commissioners on this subject.

Proposal of the Commissioners.

5th. The remaining officers to have the following salaries :

	£.
Head Messenger - -	100
1st Assistant - - -	40
2d - - - - -	30
Porter (with a gown every two years) - - -	50
	£.
Necessary woman - -	40

	£.
3 Watchmen, 25 ^s . each,	75
The Watchman in the hall to have a great coat once in two years, and an addition for cleaning the books	10

The Housekeeper appearing to be a sinecure ; and that of Inspector of Repairs unnecessary ; they ought to be abolished.

Report.

— This establishment is at present insufficient ; we therefore propose that the two extra messengers, and an extra porter now employed, should be continued during the war, and that some addition should be made to the salaries of the messengers on the establishment for their better support and maintenance.

This salary, considering the great extent of the building, and the number of apartments to be attended to, would be a very inadequate compensation for the necessary woman, who has been obliged to employ, constantly, at least two assistants.

We have already found it necessary to increase the salary from 40*l.* to 60*l.* ; and humbly propose that it should be farther augmented to 100*l.* per annum.

This part of the establishment appears to be sufficient.

We see no objection to the abolition of the office of Housekeeper, especially as there are no apartments which can be appropriated to her accommodation, and propose that an allowance equal to her present salary, viz. 40*l.* per annum, should be made to her during her life.

The office of Inspector of Repairs being rendered unneces-

*Proposal of the Commissioners.**Report.*

fary by an appointment which has taken place in the department of the Inspector General of naval works, should also be discontinued.

The establishment of messenger and servants we propose should be as follows, viz.

	£.
Head Messenger -	120
1st Assistant - - -	60
2nd - - - - -	50
2 Extras - 4ol. each -	80
Porter - - - - -	50
Extra Porter - - -	40
Necessary Woman -	100
3 Watchmen at 25l. each 75l.	} 85
More to one of them for cleaning books -	
	10

6th. That in order to keep a check on the Receiver of Fees, each of the senior Clerks should keep a list of all instruments liable to fees in his department, which he should deliver weekly to the chief Clerk for entry, with which he should compare the weekly account of the Receiver: And, in order to ascertain the fee payable on each instrument, the Clerk at whose desk it originates, should mark the amount thereof, and sign his initials thereto.

— If the plan we have proposed to your Lordships, of appointing the chief Clerk the Receiver of Fees, should be adopted, the check which that officer would have had on the Receiver, by the regulation proposed by the Commissioners, cannot be obtained: But as all accounts of receipts and expenditures have hitherto undergone the examination of one of our Secretaries; and as the lists of instruments prepared in each department would of course be referred to on the examination of the Receiver's accounts, we are of opinion that no farther check will be necessary for effectually

*Proposal of the Commissioners.**Report.*

That the amount of the fees should constitute a fund for payment of the contingencies.

That the Receiver should make up his accounts quarterly, for the approbation and allowance of the Board, and a general account at the end of the year, sworn to before a Baron of the Exchequer, be submitted to the Commissioners of the Navy, and be incorporated in the annual account of the Treasurer.

securing to the Public the amount of the fees received.

We see no objection to the noting, on each instrument, the amount of the fees chargeable thereupon, for the purpose of satisfying the person benefited of the sum which can regularly be demanded by the Receiver. We also propose, that the Table of Fees, hereunto annexed, should be hung up in the most conspicuous place in the office, to be referred to by any person who may think proper to do so.

We see no objection to the application of the surplus of fees to this purpose, after payment of the deductions that may be made from the salaries, as placed upon the ordinary estimate of the Navy.

We agree with the Commissioners in the propriety of obliging the Receiver to make up his accounts quarterly, and to close his account at the end of every year, and swear to them before a Baron of the Exchequer: But the submitting them to the Commissioners of the Navy, for the purpose of being incorporated in the Treasurer's accounts, should not be understood as allowing any control over such accounts, farther than to see that they are regularly vouched; that being an authority by no means proper or necessary to be vested in an inferior Board.

Proposal of the Commissioners.

7th. That officers on the establishment, on being obliged by age or infirmities to retire, should have a provision made to them not exceeding one half the amount of their salaries.

Report.

— We agree in opinion with the Commissioners, that proper provision should be made for officers who from age or infirmities may be incapable of performing their duty: But as cases must arise when the merit and long services of persons retiring entitle them to farther consideration from the public than a moiety of their former incomes, we cannot recommend that the extent of the provision to be made for such officers (though perhaps generally sufficient) should in all cases be limited to the proportion which the Commissioners have proposed.

If, however, it should be thought proper to establish any fixed rule, we should rather advise, that the extent of the pension to be granted should bear a proportion with length of services.

If this principle should be adopted, we recommend that the officer retiring after a service under ten years, and not less than seven, should have a pension equal to one-third of his salary:

Above ten years and under twenty, a pension equal to one moiety:

Above twenty years and under thirty, a pension equal to two-thirds:

and

Above thirty years, a pension equal to three-fourths.

Proposal of the Commissioners.

8th. That they should take an oath of secrecy :

And enter into a bond, to the amount of thrice their annual salaries, for the true and faithful performance of their duty ; and in order more effectually to prevent abuses, it should be particularized in such bond, that they will not, directly or indirectly, take or receive any fee, gratuity, or reward.

Report.

— We agree in opinion with the Commissioners, that the oath of secrecy should always be taken.

As it generally happens, that clerks are brought into office at an age when they are incapable of giving such security themselves, this regulation cannot be complied with by them ; but that objection might be removed by such security being given by their friends. If, however, a strict attention to this regulation should be required, it must be attended with some inconvenience, as, on the principle suggested by the Commissioners, a fresh security must be given on every change of situation. Upon the fullest consideration therefore of this point, we are of opinion, that unless the officer should be entrusted with the charge of money, or other property belonging to the public, no pecuniary obligation is necessary for securing his good conduct ; and as by the arrangement we have proposed, the Chief Clerk alone will be entrusted with any charge of the public money, he appears to us to be the only person from whom such pecuniary security should be required.

If any Clerk or other officer should negligently perform his duty, he would consequently be dismissed from his employment ; and in the event of any criminal conduct, the law would be re-

*Proposal of the Commissioners.**Report.*

9th. Hours of attendance.

sorted to for bringing him to farther punishment. The extent of the security to be required from the Receiver of Fees should, we think, be 5,000l.

— Upon this subject the Commissioners of Inquiry refer to their intended Report upon the office of the Commissioners of the Navy; and recommend that the rule they mean to propose therein, should be adopted in all the rest of the offices in the Naval Department. On a reference to that Report, it will appear that they have limited the time of attendance to be from ten in the morning till four in the afternoon; and a regulation to that effect has since been established in the Navy Office: But, however well adapted this regulation may be to that office of which we cannot help entertaining very considerable doubts, more especially in the branch of correspondence), it appears to us that the Commissioners of Inquiry either very little understood, or did not well consider the nature and extent of the business to be conducted by this department in time of war, or on any occasion of armament, in recommending the same hours of attendance to be established here, where business must be executed at all hours, and cannot, without manifest injury to the public service, for a moment be delayed; and we therefore submit

*Proposal of the Commissioners.**Report.*

10th. The establishment for the pay of the Marine Forces is more than sufficient for that purpose; for the duty of Paymaster, besides being inconsiderable, is almost entirely executed by Deputy, and this duty would form so small an addition to the business of Agent, that these offices may with great propriety be again consolidated.

That the office of Paymaster under the present Constitution, seems unnecessarily to intervene between the Treasurer of the Navy, who issues, and the Agent who (with a few trifling exceptions) distributes, the whole money for the Marine service; it would therefore not only be a saving to the Public, but be beneficial to the service if the whole business were left in one person, who should receive the money from the Treasurer of the Navy, distribute and account for the same, and correspond with the Deputy Paymasters at the different head quarters.

to your Lordships, whether it ought not to be, as it always has been, left to us to prescribe such rules for the attendance of the Officers and Clerks as the public service may from time to time appear to us to require.

— We agree with the Commissioners in opinion, that the offices of Agent and Paymaster may with propriety be united.

Since the inquiry took place, the Paymaster and Agent have died: The former has been succeeded by an able and attentive officer, by whom, since the year 1792, when his appointment took place, the business of nearly the whole of the Marine Department has been conducted with great diligence and regularity: We therefore humbly propose, that instead of abolishing the office of Paymaster, the office of Agent should be discontinued, and that the duties of the last-mentioned office should be executed by the Paymaster, as was formerly the practice.

We cannot, however, in this place omit to recommend, that as the present Agent has not to our knowledge neglected to perform any part of the duty committed to his care (though it has of late been reduced to little more than the payment of bills drawn by officers employed on the recruiting service), he should have some compensation for the

*Proposal of the Commissioners.**Report.*

loss he will sustain by the suppression of his office. The extent of such compensation, calculated on the principle we have before suggested, will, after a service of twenty-eight years, (the time the present Agent has been employed in the Marine Department) amount to the sum of 206l. 13s. 4d. We therefore propose that an allowance of 200l. per annum should be made to him, and that he should also receive the farther sum of 232l. to be paid over by him, as heretofore, to Mr. John Cleveland, the former Agent, making together the sum of 432l.; the peculiar circumstances under which the said allowance of 232l. has been hitherto made to the last-mentioned person, appearing to us sufficient to justify our recommending the continuance of it to him; and that the sum of 432l. per annum be paid, by the Paymaster of Marines, to the present Agent, out of the Marine poundage and stoppages, and to be inserted in his annual accounts.

This business ought to be carried on in the office of the Treasurer of the Navy; not only as a branch of the pay of the Navy, but that the Officers may be contiguous, to check the sea pay of the Marines on ship board, the debts due from those who embark, and other purposes.

By the present disposition of the apartments allotted to the Treasurer of the Navy in Somerset Place, no accommodation can be afforded to the Marine establishment in that part of the building; but the intercourse between the Treasurer's and Paymaster's Departments is seldom

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Proposal of the Commissioners.

The Officer so appointed, to pass his accounts annually before the Navy Board; and the amount thereof to be incorporated in the Treasurer of the Navy's annual account.

Upon his appointment, he ought to give such security to His Majesty as the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty shall think fit:

And have the nomination of, and become responsible for, the Deputy Paymasters at the several head quarters.

His salary ought to be 600*l.* per annum clear of all deductions, which, together with the expence of his Clerks and contingencies, should be paid, as at present, out of the fund arising by Marine poundage and stoppages.

Report.

so necessary as to render their separation a matter of inconvenience.

This regulation is consistent with the present practice.

He has already given security to the amount of 10,000*l.* which we conceive to be sufficient.

He has already the nomination, and is responsible.

We agree in the propriety of fixing the Paymaster's salary at the rate of 600*l.* per annum, clear of all deductions: and as it will be necessary to provide for the remainder of the establishment, we propose, that the Marine Pay Office shall be placed on the following footing:

	£.
Paymaster (as above) .	600
1st Clerk .	£. 300
2d	100
2 Extras, at 8 <i>ol.</i>	
and 5 <i>ol.</i> . . .	130
	530
Messenger . . .	50
House rent . . .	} 140
Taxes . . .	
Coals & candles	
	190
	£. 1,320

Proposal of the Commissioners.

The fee of two shillings and six-pence, paid twice a year by the reduced Officers on receiving their half pay, to be discontinued, as well as all other fees and gratuities at present taken in that department; nor any emoluments allowed to be received therein other than certain fixed salaries.

The Receiver and Comptroller of the rights and perquisites of the Admiralty, are appointed by and receive their instructions from the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral; as such, (although the produce, as we understand, does not belong to the Public) we think it incumbent to offer our opinion upon the manner in which we find these offices at present executed:

Report.

The extra Clerks to be discharged as soon after the termination of the war as circumstances will admit.

We agree in opinion with the Commissioners on this subject.

The Lord High Admiral is authorized to apply the rights and perquisites of Admiralty towards supporting the dignities of his office, and to appoint a Receiver to collect the same: Yet, when his Royal Highness the Prince of Denmark, and the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, respectively held that office, they signed instruments, whereby they made over all the perquisites of the Admiralty to the Queen, to be applied to the carrying on the war, excepting the sum of 2,500*l.* which Her Majesty Queen Anne reserved to herself, to dispose of as she thought fit, by her signet and sign manual: But when the office has been in commission, a clause has always been inserted in the patent, directing that the rights and perquisites of every kind whatever, shall be collected in the same manner as when there was a Lord High Admiral, but for the

*Proposal of the Commissioners.**Report.*

sole use and behoof of the Crown, and not otherwise ; and authorising the Commissioners not only to appoint a Receiver, and examine his accounts, but to grant him a quietus.

We find, however, that in the year of 1726 Mr. Byng, who had then been acting some years under the appointment of the Board of Admiralty, received a similar appointment from the King, counter-signed by the Lords of the Treasury, with instructions for his guidance in the execution of his office ; and that Mr. Goldsworthy, who succeeded, held a similar appointment ; but that neither the present Receiver, Dr. Crespigny, nor Mr. Jackson, his immediate predecessor (the latter of whom succeeded Mr. Goldsworthy) from what cause we know not, have received any similar appointment, having acted only under the appointment of the Board of Admiralty.

We understand that Mr. Byng, after his accounts had been examined by the Comptroller, delivered them into the office of the Auditors of the Imprests, and received his quietus from thence.

But although this Board, by the patent, as we have before observed, are not only authorized to appoint a Receiver, but to audit his accounts and grant him a quietus ; yet, as we do

*Proposal of the Commissioners.**Report.*

The Receiver is permitted, often, to retain considerable sums in his hands; and although the present officer gives security, and his character and responsibility preclude any apprehensions of loss from his default; yet, as it appears that a loss has been sustained by the default of his predecessor, it appears proper that no money should be allowed to remain in the hands of the Receiver, but that it should be lodged in the Bank when received; and an account there raised, in the name of "The Receiver of the Rights and Perquisites of the Admiralty," inserting the name of the Receiver for the time being; who should

not find by the books of this office any instance of the exercise of the latter part of that power, and as the King, by warrant, countersigned by the Lords of the Treasury, has, excepting in a very few instances, directed the application of the money which has from time to time been collected by the Receiver; we do not see any more proper mode can be adopted for passing his accounts than by following the example of Mr. Byng, by transmitting them to the Auditors of Public Accounts, who, since the abolition of the office of the Auditors of Imprests, have been charged with the Execution of that duty, and obtaining his quietus from them.

The revenues collected by and permitted to remain in the hands of the Receiver, have generally been so inconsiderable, that no material advantage could have been derived by him from any balances he has been possessed of; indeed it has frequently happened, but more especially in time of peace, that the sums received by him have for many years successively been found insufficient for the payment of the salaries of the Receiver and Comptroller; and as the former has given proper security for the faithful discharge of the trust reposed in him, we see no reason for obliging him to deposit the money in the Bank,

Proposal of the Commissioners.

issue his drafts for the same to the amount of such warrants as are granted upon him, specifying in such drafts the person's name to whom the same is so granted, the service for which it was granted, and the date of the warrant; and that the accounts of the Receiver ought to be examined every six months by the Comptroller, and be certified by the Lords of the Admiralty, who thereupon should obtain a warrant for discharging the Receiver of so much as he has duly accounted for. That the present receiver is very anxious to pass his accounts, but knows not how to accomplish it.

That his salary should not depend on his receipt, but should be paid to him quarterly; and in lieu of any balance remaining in his hands, an increase of 100*l.* per annum should be made to his salary, together with 50*l.* a year allowed for a Clerk; and contingencies of office may be reasonable.

Part of the Comptroller's duty is to peruse, examine, and control the accounts of the Receiver, which, however, he informs us, he has not hitherto performed; but this, we are of opinion, ought not to be omitted,

Report.

nor does it appear at all necessary that the Bank should be apprized of the services to which such money has been applied.

We have no objection to increasing his salary to the extent the Commissioners of Inquiry have recommended; or to his continuing to deduct the amount thereof, as also the salary of his clerk, out of the produce of the revenues, or to the paying it quarterly, if such revenues shall be in his hands; but in case the same should, as in many instances it has, fall short, we know of no fund that is applicable to that purpose.

This part of the duty of the Comptroller has, for some years past, been regularly performed; and reports have been made to us, by him, after such examination. We are not aware that the present Comptroller has omitted

Proposal of the Commissioners.

nor any other part of the duty required of him : for the performance of which his present salary appears to be fully adequate ; which salary, however, ought to be paid to him quarterly, independent of the produce of the rights and perquisites.

Report.

to execute any other duty which properly attaches to his situation. We propose that his salary should continue to be paid in the same manner as the salary of the Receiver.

If the proposal above-mentioned should be approved, the establishment will stand as follows, viz.

	£.
Receiver . . .	400
Clerk and contingencies	50
	— 450
Solicitor and Comptroller	200
	—
	£. 650
	—

By the arrangement we have proposed to your Lordships, the salaries of the Secretaries, Clerks, and inferior Officers, in the Naval and Marine Department, including the Marine Pay-office, will amount to 9,015l. per annum, and exceed, in time of peace (excepting what may be to be deducted from the number of extra Clerks who may then be to be discharged), the establishment proposed by the Commissioners of Inquiry by the sum of 4,543l. and in time of war by the sum of 7,118l. : But however considerable the increase may be, we trust it will appear that these salaries, though, perhaps, liberal, do not exceed what ought to be given to persons holding those situations.

The fees received in the Naval and Marine Departments, in the last thirty years, viz. from the year 1769 to the year 1798 inclusive, amount to 152,019l. 11s. 1d. which, supposing the future receipts will be equal to the former, will, on the average, amount to the sum of 5,067l. 6s. 4d. per annum : That sum, or whatever may be received, we propose, after payment of the duties and taxes chargeable on the salaries of the Secretaries, Clerks, &c. should be applied, as the Commissioners of Inquiry

have recommended, to the defraying the contingent expences of the office.

Which is, nevertheless, most humbly submitted,

Admiralty Office,
August 13th, 1799.

(Copy) *Evean Nepean.*

Spencer.
Arden.
Ph. Stephens.
Ja. Gambier.
Wm. Young.
Tho. Wallace.
Rob. Man.

A TABLE of the RATE of FEES to be paid on certain Instruments issued from the ADMIRALTY OFFICE.

	£.	s.	d.
For a Commission—To a Flag Officer - - -	5	5	0
Vice Admiral of a maritime county - - - - -	3	3	0
Captain to a ship of war - - -	2	2	0
Lieutenant of ditto - - -	1	1	0
General of Marines - - -	7	5	0
Lieutenant General - - -	7	5	0
Major General - - - - -	7	5	0
Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel of Marines - - - - -	6	6	0
Major and Captain - - -	5	5	0
A Captain Lieutenant and First Lieutenant - - - - -	4	4	0
Second Lieutenant - - -	3	3	0
An Adjutant and Quarter-master, each - - - - -	2	2	0
For a Warrant—To the Attorney General to prepare a Patent for a Commissioner of the Navy, Victualling, or Sick and Hurt Boards - - -	5	5	0
An Assistant to the Surveyor - - -	3	3	0
Secretary to the Navy, Victualling, or Sick and Hurt Boards - - -	3	3	0
A Commissioner of the Sixpenny Office - - - - -	3	3	0

For a Warrant—To an Officer in the Yards, whose sa-			£.	s.	d.
lary is 300l. a year and upwards			4	4	0
A ditto, whose salary is 200l.			3	3	0
A ditto, whose salary is 100l.			2	2	0
A ditto, whose salary is under 100l.			1	1	0
A Chaplain or Surgeon to the Yards			3	3	0
A Master Sailmaker, Joiner, Brick-					
layer, Carpenter, Smith, Master					
Mastmaker, Boat-builder to the					
Yard			2	2	0
A Purser, Gunner, Boatswain, Car-					
penter, of 1st, 2d, and 3d rates			2	2	0
An Officer of those ranks in infe-					
rior rates			1	1	0
A Chaplain of a ship of war			0	10	6
An Agent Victualler, whose salary					
is 300l. and upwards			4	4	0
A ditto Storekeeper, Clerk of the					
Checque, or other Officer of the					
Victualling, whose salary is 200l.			3	3	0
A ditto, whose salary is 100l.			2	2	0
A ditto, under 100l.			1	1	0
Admit a Scholar in the Royal					
Academy			1	1	0
Prepare a Patent for the Judge and					
Register of the Admiralty, each			5	5	0
Appoint the Lord High Admiral,					
Advocate, Proctor, and Marshal,					
each			3	3	0
A Counsellor for the Affairs of the					
Admiralty			5	5	0
An Assistant to the said Counsellor			5	5	0
A Judge of the Vice Admiralty Court			3	3	0
A Register of ditto			3	3	0
A Marshal of ditto			3	3	0
A Judge Advocate of the Fleet			3	3	0
A Deputy ditto			3	3	0
A Physician to the Fleet			3	3	0
The Lieutenant Governor, and for					
entering the Patent for Treasurer					
of Greenwich Hospital, each			3	3	0
A Captain in Greenwich Hospital			2	2	0
A Lieutenant in ditto			1	1	0

DEBATES.

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For a Warrant—To the Physician, Secretary, and Steward of Greenwich Hospital, each	£.	s.	d.
The Chaplains and Clerk of the Cheque to Greenwich Hospital, each	3	3	0
A Director of ditto	2	2	0
All other Officers of ditto, each	1	1	0
For Letters of Marque and Commissions to Privateers	1	1	0
A Surgeon of Marines	2	2	0
A Surgeon's Mate	1	1	0
For an Order—To grant Pensions under a 100l. a-year from 100l. to 200l. inclusive	2	2	0
from 200l. to 300l.	3	3	0
from 300l. to 400l.	4	4	0
from 400l. to 500l. and upwards	5	5	0
A Superannuated Lieutenant	2	2	0
Warrant Officers of 1st, 2d, and 3d rates	2	2	0
Ditto from a 3d rate downwards	1	1	0
For a Certificate—To a Captain of a ship of war having delivered his journals into the office	0	5	0
A Lieutenant ditto	0	2	6
A Captain of a ship of war having delivered his observations on coasts and roads	0	5	0
Masters of ships of war, for ditto	0	2	6
A Midshipman, of having lodged his original certificate of examination into the office	0	2	6
For a Letter—Of leave for a Flag Officer to go abroad	2	2	0
Ditto for a Captain of a ship of war	1	1	0
Ditto for a Lieutenant or Master	0	10	6
Ditto for an Officer of Marines, above the rank of Captain	2	2	0
Ditto for a Captain of Marines	1	1	0
Ditto for a Lieutenant of ditto	0	10	6
For a New Pass—To secure the ships and vessels of His Majesty's subjects from the Algerines	1	5	0
Renewing ditto	0	15	0

	£.	s.	d.
For all Reports on a Reference where any person is granted	1	1	0
For a Protection—For Shipwrights, Boat-builders, Caulkers and Sailmakers, 50 men and upwards	-	-	2 2 0
For ditto, for upwards of 4 and under 50 men	-	-	1 1 0
For ditto, for 4 men and under	0	10	6
For merchant vessels of 10 men and upwards	-	-	0 10 6
For ditto - - - under 10 men	-	0	5 0
For ditto - - - a single person	-	0	2 6

Copy of a LETTER from the Right Honourable the Governor General in Council, in the Political Department, to the Court of Directors; dated the 16th May, 1799:—Received per Sarah Christiana, 13 Sept. 1799.

To the Honourable the Court of Directors for Affairs of the Honourable United Company of Merchants of England, trading to the East Indies.

Honourable Sirs,

Para. 1. On the 11th instant we had the honour of forwarding to your honourable Court the copy of a short dispatch from Lieutenant General Harris, announcing the event of the fall of Seringapatam, and the death of Tippoo Sulthan.

2. Having since received from Lieutenant General Harris the details relative to that memorable conquest, we enclose, for your information, a copy of the Commander in Chief's letter to the right honourable the Governor General; of which we have thought it adviseable to omit a passage containing matter on which an important political arrangement actually depends, and we have, therefore, no doubt that it will be more satisfactory to your honourable Court, that this subject should, for the present, be communicated only to the Secret Committee.

3. Having already congratulated your honourable Court upon the important event of the capture of Seringapatam, and having assured you of the most vigilant attention of the Governor General in Council to improve the advantages which may be expected to arise from this brilliant and decisive success, it is our principal object in this address, to draw the attention of your honourable Court to the merits of that gallant army which achieved the conquest of the capital of Myfore.

4. We have no doubt that your honourable Court will view with admiration the consummate judgment with which the assault was planned, the unequalled rapidity, animation, and skill, with which it was executed, and the humanity which distinguished its final success.

5. The lustre of this victory can be equalled only by the substantial advantages which it promises to establish, by restoring the peace and safety of the British possessions in India on a durable foundation of genuine security; and your honourable Court will assuredly concur in the sentiments of national pride, satisfaction, and gratitude, with which we reflect, that, in this arduous crisis, the spirit and exertions of the India army have kept pace with those of our countrymen at home, and that in India, as in Europe, Great Britain has found in the malevolent designs of her enemies, an increasing source of her own prosperity, fame, and power.

6. Under the warmest impressions of its discipline, zeal, and valour, we beg leave to recommend this brave and gallant army to the favourable notice of your honourable Court, and to the applause and gratitude of their King and Country.

We have the honour to be,

With the greatest respect,

Fort St. George,

16th May 1799.

Honourable Sirs,

Your faithful, humble servants,

(Signed)

Mornington,

Clive,

Wm. Petrie,

E. H. Falkfield.

(No. 1.)—Copy of a LETTER from the Commander in Chief to the Right Honourable the Governor General; dated Seringapatam, 7th May 1799.

My Lord,

On the 4th instant, I had the honour to address to your Lordship a hasty note, containing in a few words the sum of our success, which I have now to report more in detail.

The fire of our batteries, which began to batter in breach on the 30th April, had on the evening of the 3d instant so much destroyed the walls against which it was directed, that the arrangement was then made for assaulting the place on the following day, when the breach was reported practicable; the troops intended to be employed were stationed in the trenches early in the morning of the 4th, that no extraordinary movement might lead the enemy to expect the assault, which I had determined to make in the heat of

the day, as the time best calculated to ensure success, as their troops would then be least prepared to oppose us.

Ten flank companies of Europeans taken from those regiments necessarily left to guard our camp and out-posts, followed by the 12th, 33d, 73d, and 74th regiments, and three corps of grenadier sepoy, taken from the troops of the three presidencies, with 200 of his Highness the Nizam's troops, formed the party for the assault, accompanied by 100 of the artillery, and the corps of pioneers, and supported in the trenches by the battalion companies of the regiment De Meuron, and four battalions of Madras sepoy. Colonel Sherbrooke, and Lieutenant Colonels Dunlop, Dalrymple, Gardiner, and Mignan, commanded the several flank corps; and Major General Baird was entrusted with the direction of this important service.

At one o'clock the troops moved from the trenches, crossed the rocky bed of the Cavery, under an extremely heavy fire, passed the glacis and ditch, and ascended the breaches in the Fausse Braye, and rampart of the fort, surmounting, in the most gallant manner, every obstacle which the difficulty of the passage, and the resistance of the enemy, presented to oppose their progress. Major General Baird had divided his force for the purpose of clearing the ramparts to the right and left. One division was commanded by Colonel Sherbrooke, the other by Lieutenant Colonel Dunlop; the latter was disabled in the breach; but both corps, although strongly opposed, were completely successful. Resistance continued to be made from the palace of Tippoo for some time after all firing had ceased from the works: two of his sons were there, who, on assurance of safety, surrendered to the troops surrounding them; and guards were placed for the protection of the family, most of whom were in the palace. It was soon after reported that Tippoo Sultaun had fallen; Syed Saheb, Meer Saduc, Syed Gofar, and many other of his chiefs were also slain. Measures were immediately adopted to stop the confusion, at first unavoidable in a city strongly garrisoned, crowded with inhabitants, and their property in ruins from the fire of a numerous artillery, and taken by assault. The Princes were removed to camp.

It appeared to Major General Baird so important to ascertain the fate of the Sultaun, that he caused immediate search to be made for his body, which, after much difficulty, was found late in the evening in one of the gates, under a heap of slain, and soon after placed in the palace. The corpse was the next day recognized by the family, and interred with the honours due to his rank, in the Mausoleum of his father.

The strength of the fort is such, both from its natural position and the stupendous works by which it is surrounded, that all the exertions of the brave troops who attacked, in whose praise it is impossible to say too much, were required to place it in our hands. Of the merits of the army, I have expressed my opinion in orders, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose; and I trust your Lordship will point out their services to the favourable notice of their King and Country.

I am sorry to add, that on collecting the returns of our loss; it is found to be much heavier than I had at first imagined.

On the 5th instant, Abdul Khalic, the elder of the Princes, formerly hostages with Lord Cornwallis, surrendered himself at our outposts, demanding protection; Kerim Saib, the brother of Tippoo, had before sought refuge with Meer Allum Behauder. A cowl namah was yesterday dispatched to Futtoh Hyder, the eldest son of Tippoo, inviting him to join his brothers; Purneah and Meer Kummer Odeen Khan, have also been summoned to Seringapatam; no answers have yet been received, but I expect them shortly, as their families are in the fort.

This moment Ali Reza, formerly one of the vakeels from Tippoo Sultaun to Lord Cornwallis has arrived from Meer Kummer Odeen Khann, to ask my orders for 4,000 horse, now under his command; Ali Reza was commissioned to declare, that Meer Kummer Odeen would make no conditions, but rely on the generosity of the English.

Monsieur Chapuy, and most of the French, are prisoners; they have commissions from the French Government.

Seringapatam,
7th May 1799.

I have the honour, &c.
(Signed) *George Harris.*

Abstract of a RETURN of Killed, Wounded, and Missing, at the Assault of Seringapatam on the 4th of May 1799.

Europeans Killed—Two Captains, six Lieutenants, three Serjeants, one Drummer, and fifty-eight rank and file.

Ditto Wounded—One Lieutenant Colonel, four Captains, eight Lieutenants, three Ensigns, two Conductors, twelve Serjeants, five Drummers, and two hundred and twenty-eight rank and file.

Ditto Missing—One Serjeant, and three rank and file.

Natives Killed—Thirteen rank and file.

Ditto Wounded—One Jemidar, two Drummers, and thirty-one rank and file.

Ditto Missing—Two rank and file.

Names of Officers Killed and Wounded on the Assault.

Killed—Lieutenant Mather, of the 75th, and Captain Owen, of the 77th; flank companies, Lieutenant Lalor, of the 73d, Lieutenants Farquhar, Prendergraft, Hill, and Shawe, of the 74th; Captain Cormick, of the pioneers.

Wounded—Lieutenants Turner, Broughton, and Skelton, of the 75th; Lieutenant Colonel Dunlop and Lieutenant Lawrence of the 77th; Lieutenant Webb, of the Bombay regiment; Captain Lardy and Lieutenant Matthews of the Meuron regiment flank companies; Lieutenant Shawe, of the 76th, serving with the 12th; Captain Macleod, Lieutenant Thomas, Ensigns Autil and Guthrie of the 73d; Captain Caldwell, of the engineers, and Captain Prescott, of the artillery.

Copy of GENERAL ORDERS; dated Camp at Seringapatam, 5th May 1799.

The Commander in Chief congratulates the gallant army which he has the honour to command, on the conquest of yesterday; the effects arising from the attainment of such an acquisition as far exceed the present limits of detail, as the unremitting zeal, labour, and unparalleled valour of the troops surpass his power of praise: for services, so incalculable in their consequences, he must consider the army as well entitled to the applause and gratitude of their country at large.

While Lieutenant General Harris sincerely laments the loss sustained in the valuable officers and men who fell in the attack, he cannot omit to return his thanks in the warmest terms to Major General Baird, for the decided and able manner in which he conducted the assault, and for the humane measures which he subsequently adopted for preserving order and regularity in the place. He requests that Major General Baird will communicate to the officers and men who, on that great occasion, acted under his command, the high sense he must entertain of their achievements and merits.

The Commander in Chief requests, that Colonel Gent, and the corps of engineers under his orders, will accept his thanks for their unremitting exertions in conducting the duties of that very important department; and his best acknowledgments are due to Major Beatson, for the essential assistance given to this branch of the service by the constant exertions of his ability and zeal.

The merits of the artillery corps is so strongly expressed by the effects of their fire, that the Commander in Chief can only desire Colonel Smith to assure the officers and men of the excellent corps under his command, that he feels most fully their claim to approbation.

In thus publicly expressing his sense of their good conduct, the Commander in Chief finds himself called upon to notice, in a most particular manner, the exertion of Captain Dowse, and his corps of pioneers, which, during the present service, have been equally marked by unremitting labour, and the ability with which that labour was applied.

On referring to the progress of the siege, so many occasions have occurred for applause to the troops, that it is difficult to particularize individual merit; but the gallant manner in which Lieutenant Colonel Shaw, the Honourable Colonel Willefly, Lieutenant Colonel Money Penny, the Honourable Lieutenant Colonel St. John, Major Macdonald, Major Skelby, and Lieutenant Colonel Wallace, conducted the attacks on the several outworks and posts of the enemy, demands to be recorded; and the very spirited attack led by Lieutenant Colonel Campbell, of His Majesty's 74th regiment, which tended so greatly to secure the position our troops had attained in the enemy's works on the 26th ultimo, claims the strongest approbation of the Commander in Chief.

The important part taken by the Bombay army since the commencement of the siege, in all the operations which led to its honourable conclusion, has been such as well sustains its long established reputation. The gallant manner in which the post at the village of Agrar was seized by the force under Colonel Hart, the ability displayed in directing the fire of the batteries established there, the vigour with which every attack of the enemy on the outposts of that army was repulsed, and the spirit shewn in the assault of the breach by the corps led by Lieutenant Colonel Dunlop, are points of particular notice, for which the Commander in Chief requests Lieut. Gen. Stuart will offer his best thanks to the officers and troops employed.

Lieutenant General Harris trusts, that Lieutenant General Stuart will excuse his thus publicly expressing his sense of the cordial co-operation and assistance received from him during the present service; in the course of which he has ever found it difficult to separate the sentiments of his public duty from the warmest feelings of his private friendship.

Extract from *General Orders*; dated Seringapatam, 8th May 1799.

Lieutenant General Harris has particular pleasure in publishing to the army the following extract of a Report transmitted to him yesterday by Major General Baird, as it places in a distinguished point of view the merit of an officer on the very important occasion referred to, whose general gallantry and good conduct since he has served with this army, have not failed to recommend him strongly to the Commander in Chief.

" If, where all behaved nobly, it is proper to mention individual merit, I know no man so justly entitled to praise as Colonel Sherbrooke, to whose exertion I feel myself much indebted for the success of the attack."

True Copies. (Signed) *P. A. Agnew*, Military Secretary.

A true Copy *J. Webbe*, Secretary to Government.

(No. 2.)—Copy of a General Order by Government; dated 15th May 1799.

G. O. By Government. Fort St. George, 15th May 1799.

The Right Honourable the Governor General in Council, having this day received from the Commander in Chief of the allied army in the field, the official details of the glorious and decisive victory obtained at Seringapatam on the 4th of May, offers his cordial thanks and sincere congratulations to the Commander in Chief, and to all the officers and men composing the gallant army which achieved the capture of the capital of Mysore on that memorable day.

His Lordship views with admiration the consummate judgment with which the assault was planned, the unequalled rapidity, animation, and skill, with which it was executed, and the humanity which distinguished its final success.

Under the favour of Providence and the justice of our cause, the established character of the army had inspired an early confidence, that the war in which we were engaged would be brought to a speedy, prosperous, and honourable issue.

But the events of the 4th May, while they have surpassed even the sanguine expectations of the Governor General in Council, have raised the reputation of the British arms in India to a degree of splendour and glory unrivaled in the military history of this quarter of the globe, and seldom approached in any part of the world.

The lustre of this victory can be equalled only by the substantial advantages which it promises to establish, by restoring the peace and safety of the British possessions in India on a durable foundation of genuine security.

The Governor General in Council reflects with pride, satisfaction, and gratitude, that in this arduous crisis the spirit and exertion of our Indian army have kept pace with those of our countrymen at home; and that in India, as in Europe, Great Britain has found in the malevolent designs of her enemies, an increasing source of her own prosperity, fame, and power.

By order of the Right Hon. the Governor General in Council.

(Signed) *J. Webbe*, Secretary to Government.

(A true Copy) *J. Webbe*, Secretary to Government.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, January 21.

The House met this day, pursuant to adjournment.

The new Bishop of Oxford (Dr. Randolph) was introduced with the usual formalities, sworn, and took his seat. His supporters were, the Bishops of Gloucester and Chichester.

Lord GRENVILLE rose, not, he said, to make any motion; but to intimate to their Lordships, that it was likely he should the next day bring down a message from His Majesty, and at the same time, by His Majesty's command, lay certain important papers on their Lordships table, which he would then move should be taken into consideration on a future day.

The Duke of NORFOLK said, that he came down with an intention of moving an address to His Majesty, praying that he would give orders that there be laid before the House copies and translations of the letters of Bonaparte, Chief Consul of the French Republic, to His Majesty, together with the answers to the same: but, perhaps, the papers which the noble Lord thought he should bring down the next day, might preclude the necessity of such a motion.

Lord GRENVILLE observed, that, consistent with the forms of the House, he could not anticipate what the papers he alluded to might be; but the noble Duke would do well to postpone his motion till the morrow.

The Duke of NORFOLK then gave notice, that unless the papers in question were laid on the table to-morrow, he would make the motion for the address which he had already stated.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, January 21.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House, that he had received from His Royal Highness Field Marshal the Duke of York, Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Forces, the following answer to Mr. Speaker's letter, requesting His Royal Highness to signify to the General and other Officers referred to therein, the thanks of this House of the 26th day of September 1799.

SIR, *Head Quarters, Schagen Brug, 10th October 1799.*

In consequence of your letter of the 26th ultimo, I have communicated the thanks of the Honourable House of Commons, to Lieutenant General Sir Ralph Abercromby, the Generals, and other Officers, under his command, together with their approbation and acknowledgement for the services of the troops employed at the attack of the Helder on the 27th of August 1799, which thanks have been received by Sir Ralph Abercromby, the Generals, other Officers, and Troops, as one of the most honourable testimonies and best rewards of their exertion in the service of their country.

I beg to express, that having been employed to communicate the resolutions of the House of Commons upon this occasion, I shall ever consider as one of the most pleasing circumstances of my military life.

I am, Sir,

Yours,

FREDERICK.

*The Right Honourable
The Speaker of the House of Commons.*

Mr. Speaker also acquainted the House, that he had received from Admiral Lord Viscount Duncan the following letter, inclosing one to his Lordship from Vice Admiral Mitchell, in return to the thanks of this House of the 26th Day of September, 1799, signified to him by his Lordship.

SIR, *Kent, Yarmouth Roads, 30th December 1799.*

I have the honour to inclose Vice Admiral Mitchell's acknowledgment of the thanks voted by the House of Commons to the naval department in the late expedition to Holland; and should have done so sooner, had not the original miscarried.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

DUNCAN.

*The Right Honourable
Henry Addington, &c. &c. &c.*

MY LORD,

*His Majesty's Ship Isis, in the
Vlieter Channel, 15th October 1799.*

I had the honour to receive your Lordship's letter of the 30th September last, accompanied with the copy of one to you from the Speaker of the House of Commons, and the unanimous vote of thanks of that House to me, and to the Captains, Officers, Seamen, and Marines, employed under my command, in the expedition against Holland.

When the important plan of rescuing from the hands of an usurping power, a fleet that should have acted as the friend of Great Britain, was committed to me, I determined that no exertions should be wanting on my part to secure so desirable an object; and your Lordship's continuing and assisting me in the trust with which I was vested, did not lessen those exertions. The weather soon occasioned obstacles that required our utmost skill and activity to surmount; and they could not have been surmounted but by the most ardent zeal in the Captains, and in the whole fleet, which the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty and your Lordship did me the honour to put under my orders, whose conduct was more like that of brothers than of men serving under command.

To two other causes also do we owe our success. First, the unanimity that prevailed between the army and navy; and, next, the very liberal equipment of the armament by the executive branches of His Majesty's Government. The least deficiency in the former, would have lost us the favourable moment of landing; and, in the latter, would have rendered us unequal to persevere against the storms we encountered.

If any thing could add value to the unanimous vote of thanks of the Commons of Great Britain, it would be the obliging terms in which the Speaker has conveyed that vote to your Lordship, together with the very friendly manner in which your Lordship has transmitted it to me. I have taken the earliest opportunity to communicate it to the Captains, Officers, Seamen, and Marines, under my command; and, conscious of our own zeal in the cause of our King and Country, we have equal pride and satisfaction to find our services approved and acknowledged by so high and so honourable an authority.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most obliged, most obedient,

And faithful, humble servant;

The Right Honourable

Admiral Lord Viscount Duncan.

A. MITCHELL.

Colonel STANLEY presented a petition in behalf of the debtors confined in Lancashire gaol, stating the distresses of their situation; and submitting to the humanity of the House, whether it might not be just, that the act of 1797, with regard to debtor and creditor, should be extended to them; or that they might have such other relief as to the humanity and wisdom of the House should seem meet. Ordered to be laid on the table.

Mr. WILLIAM DUNDAS moved for a new writ for Dunfermline and Stirling, in the room of William Tait, Esq.

Mr. SHERIDAN rose to give notice that it was his intention to introduce a motion respecting the late expedition to Holland. A call of the House, he should think, would be proper previous to the discussion of that subject; but that he did not intend to move: perhaps it might occur to some other member to do so; and if it did, it should have his concurrence. The motion he intended to make he should make on Monday, the 3d of February.

Mr. TIERNEY wished to know whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer had any objection to a call of the House for the discussion of this important business?

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that he could not, personally, have any objection whatever to a call of the House. All the Members who could be present without great inconvenience, he conceived, would attend the discussion of that question; they would be naturally led by its importance to attend. Upon the subject of a call of the House, however, there might be many Members who had great

objections to it, though he had none, as far as regarded himself. Under that impression, the regular way would be to give notice that a call of the House was intended to be moved for. He had no anxiety upon it, either one way or other; he only submitted what appeared to him to be the fair course. He had another subject to give notice of; and farther than notice it was not regular to go at present; but it was a subject likely to occupy the serious attention of the House. He expected to have the honour to-morrow of making a communication to the House from His Majesty; accompanied by certain papers, respecting the recent overtures on the part of France for a negotiation for peace; and it was his intention to move, that the message of His Majesty should be taken into consideration on Monday next.

Mr. TIERNEY thought this too short a notice for the discussion of such a subject, which he conceived should not precede a call. Indeed, he lamented to see the House so thinly attended upon deliberations of the greatest moment. So much was this the case, that he, who was scarcely absent upon any one division, had seen questions of the greatest magnitude decided by what (with both sides counted) would not amount to half the number of the Members of that House; he should move for a call of the House on Monday, the 3d of February. He had no objection to the giving that notice, though, at the same time, he did not understand it a thing to be insisted upon, that notice should be given of a motion for a call; he understood the current practice of Members on that subject was to move without notice. Therefore if the right honourable gentleman had no objection, he should move for a call of the House on the 3d of February.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that he, individually, had no objection; but conceiving that many other Members who could not be present on the 3d of February, would have great objections to a call so much on the sudden, he should certainly oppose that motion.

Mr. TIERNEY said he would not move it now; but would give the Chancellor of the Exchequer time to consider till to-morrow.

Mr. LONG brought up an account which had been ordered to be laid before the House, of the net income of the Post-office for the years 1797, 1798, 1799, as far as it could be made up.—Ordered to be laid on the table.

Mr. ABBOT then moved for various accounts relative to Revenue and Trade; which was ordered.

Mr. TIERNEY then moved, that there be laid before the House,

An account, shewing how the monies raised by virtue of an act, passed in the present Session of Parliament, for raising a certain sum by loans or Exchequer Bills, for the service of the year 1800, have been disposed of and applied.

An account, shewing how the money, given for the service of the year 1799 has been disposed of, distinguished under the several heads, and the parts remaining unsatisfied, with the estimated surplus thereon.

An account of the debt in Exchequer Bills outstanding on the 5th of January 1800; distinguishing the different heads, the funds on which the same are chargeable, and the sums remaining in the Exchequer to satisfy the same.

An account of the total produce of the tax upon income, for the year ending 5th of April 1800, as far as the same can be made up and estimated; distinguishing the amount in consequence of assessments by the Commercial Commissioners.

An account of the income of and charges upon the consolidated fund, for the quarters ending the 5th of April, 5th of July, and 10th of October 1799, and 5th of January 1800.

An account, shewing how the money raised by virtue of an act of the last Session, intituled, "An Act for enabling His Majesty to raise the sum of three millions, for the uses and purposes therein mentioned," have been disposed of and applied.

An account of the total amount produced by an act, passed in the 38th year of His Majesty's reign, intituled, "An Act for granting an aid and contribution for the prosecution of the war."

An account of the total amount produced by an act, passed in the 38th year of His Majesty's reign, for granting certain additional duties of customs on goods exported and imported, and on tonnage of ships, to the 5th of January 1800; distinguishing each quarter.

An account of the distribution of the sum of 2,500,000*l.* granted to His Majesty, towards enabling His Majesty to defray the extraordinary services of the army, for the year 1799, paid by the right honourable the Paymaster General of His Majesty's forces; together with an account of the extraordinary expences of the army, incurred and paid between the 25th of December 1798 and the 25th of December 1799, and not provided for by Parliament.

An account shewing how the money raised by virtue of two acts, passed in the present Session, intituled, "An Act for continuing and granting to His Majesty certain duties upon malt, mum, cyder, and perry, for the service of the year one thousand eight

“ hundred,” and “ An Act for continuing and granting to His Majesty a duty on pensions, offices, and personal estates, in England, Wales, and the town of Berwick upon Tweed, and certain duties on sugar, malt, tobacco, and snuff, for the service of the year one thousand eight hundred,” have been disposed of and applied.—Which were all ordered.

Mr. Tierney then moved,

That there be laid before this House, an account of the amount of advances to Government, by the Bank, on Land, Malt, Exchequer Bills, and other securities, together with the amount due for interest, as the same stood on the 21st of September, October, November, and December, 1799, and 21st of January 1800; and also an account of the amount of the Exchequer Bills taken up by the Bank to the present period.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that to the first part of this motion he had no objection; but to the latter part he had. The House of Commons should not inquire in what way the Bank of England laid out its money, any more than they should inquire into the affairs of any private man. The latter part of this motion was for an inquiry into the Exchequer Bills in the hands of the Bank, which was a private concern; and as such he objected to it.

Mr. TIERNEY observed, that his object was to learn how much in reality the Bank of England was in advance to Government. Whether they advanced money by loan, or whether they advanced it on Exchequer Bills, it was the same in his view of the subject; for it still was an advance to Government, although Exchequer Bills were held as a security for that money. It was no inquiry into the management of the private affairs of the Bank. The object was simply to learn how much, in point of fact, the Bank was in advance to Government; and it was impossible to ascertain that fact without knowing what Exchequer Bills the Bank held at this time. He did not move this from any malicious motive, but merely as a necessary piece of information upon the state of public finance; neither was the motion without a precedent. But if the Chancellor of the Exchequer persisted in opposing it, he should not press it, because by pressing it he had no hopes of success.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, “ I am doing my duty, as a Member of Parliament, when I oppose a measure which appears to me to be an improper one. I assign reasons why I think the motion improper; it is competent to me to do so. If the honourable gentleman thinks, as he says he does, that the motion is such as the House ought to adopt, it is not only competent to him, but I conceive it to be his duty to call for the sense of the House. He makes his

motion, and assigns reasons in support of it. I oppose him, and assign such reasons as occur to me against his motion, and the House should decide between us. But what he states as a precedent is not applicable to the case before us: the case he alludes to, was that of an inquiry instituted by this House into the solvency of the Bank. It was natural then to call for an account of its debts and of its credits; for we were then to report upon its solvency; and the result was, as might have been expected, highly to the credit of the Bank. But, in the present instance, I contend, that what is now asked with regard to the Bank might as well be asked of any banker; therefore, upon that ground, I feel myself called upon to oppose that part of the motion, and shall now move an amendment, to leave out that part of it"—which he moved accordingly.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he did not agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the application of the precedent upon the solvency of the Bank. This reminded him, that at the time alluded to the Bank complained of the pressure which came upon it by the drainage of their cash by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. "However," said Mr. Tierney, "I will not press my motion, not because I do not think it a proper one, but because the right honourable gentleman resists it; and I have been taught by experience, that his reasons are much more forcible than mine in this House. Whenever he states any measure of his own, or opposes any measure of mine, he always carries his point. Now, without vanity, at least without much of it, I may say, that by accident I may have been right once in my life; but if I refer to the decisions of this House, in which that right honourable gentleman and myself were opponents, I have never been in the right. Therefore I say, that because he opposes me, I give it up, and not because I think the motion is improper."

The amendment was then put and carried; and afterwards the first part of the motion was agreed to.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, January 22.

Lord GRENVILLE acquainted their Lordships, that he had it in command to deliver a message from His Majesty to that House, and to lay before the House certain papers referred to therein. His Lordship moved that His Majesty's message be then read, which was done accordingly, and was as follows:

GEORGE R.

The supplies granted in the commencement of the present Session having been calculated to provide only for the first months of the year, His Majesty now recommends it to the House of Commons, to make such farther provision as they may judge necessary, under the present circumstances, for the several branches of the public service, and for the vigorous prosecution of the war; and His Majesty has given directions that the proper estimates for this purpose should be laid before the House.

His Majesty has thought proper on this occasion to direct that there should be laid before the House, copies of communications recently received from the enemy, and of the answers which have been returned thereto, by His Majesty's command.

His Majesty entertains the fullest confidence that those answers will appear to this House to have been conformable to that line of conduct which was required from His Majesty on this occasion, by his regard to all the most important interests of his dominions. And His Majesty, having no object more at heart than that of contributing, as soon as the situation of affairs shall render it practicable, to the re-establishment of the general tranquillity of Europe, on a sure and solid foundation, and of providing effectually for the security and permanent prosperity of his faithful people, places a firm reliance on the continued support of his Parliament, and on the zeal and perseverance of his subjects, in such measures as may best tend to confirm the signal advantages which have been obtained, to the common cause, in the course of the last campaign, and to conduct the great contest, in which His Majesty is engaged, to a safe and honourable conclusion.

G. R.

His Lordship then presented the following State Papers referred to in the foregoing message :

Letters from the Minister of Foreign Affairs in France, and from General Bonaparte; with the Answers returned to them by the Right Honourable Lord Grenville, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

No. I.**(TRANSLATION.)**

Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs in France to Lord Grenville.

MY LORD,

I dispatch, by order of General Bonaparte, First Consul of the French Republic, a messenger to London; he is the bearer of a letter from the

First Consul of the Republic to His Majesty the King of England. I request you to give the necessary orders that he may be enabled to deliver it directly into your own hands. This step, in itself, announces the importance of its object.

Accept, my Lord, the assurance of my highest consideration.

(Signed) CH. MAU. TALLEYRAND.

*Paris the 5th Nivose, 8th year of the
French Republic, (Dec. 25, 1799.)*

No. II.

(TRANSLATION.)

French Republic—Sovereignty of the People—Liberty—Equality.

Bonaparte, First Consul of the Republic, to His Majesty the King of Great Britain and of Ireland.

Paris, the 5th Nivose, 8th year of the Republic.

Called by the wishes of the French Nation to occupy the first Magistracy of the Republic, I think it proper, on entering into office, to make a direct communication of it to your Majesty.

The war which for eight years has ravaged the four quarters of the world, must it be eternal? Are there no means of coming to an understanding?

How can the two most enlightened nations of Europe, powerful and strong beyond what their safety and independence require, sacrifice to ideas of vain greatness, the benefits of commerce, internal prosperity, and the happiness of families? How is it that they do not feel that peace is of the first necessity, as well as of the first glory?

These sentiments cannot be foreign to the heart of your Majesty, who reigns over a free nation, and with the sole view of rendering it happy.

Your Majesty will only see in this overture my sincere desire to contribute efficaciously, for the second time, to a general pacification by a step, speedy, entirely of confidence, and disengaged from those forms which, necessary perhaps to disguise the dependence of weak States, prove only in those which are strong the mutual desire of deceiving each other.

France and England, by the abuse of their strength, may still, for a long time, for the misfortune of all nations, retard the period of their being exhausted.—But I will venture to say it, the fate of all civilized nations is attached to the termination of a war which involves the whole world.

Your Majesty's,

(Signed) BONAPARTE.

No. III.

Letter from Lord Grenville, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in France.

SIR,

Downing-Street, January 4, 1800.

I have received and laid before the King the two letters which you have transmitted to me; and His Majesty, seeing no reason to depart from

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those forms which have long been established in Europe for transacting business with Foreign States, has commanded me to return, in his name, the official answer which I send you herewith inclosed.

I have the honour to be,

With high consideration,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed)

GRENVILLE.

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs,

&c. &c. &c. at Paris.

No. IV.

OFFICIAL NOTE.

The King has given frequent proofs of his sincere desire for the re-establishment of secure and permanent tranquillity in Europe. He neither is, nor has been, engaged in any contest for a vain and false glory. He has had no other view than that of maintaining against all aggression the rights and happiness of his subjects.

For these he has contended against an unprovoked attack; and for the same objects he is still obliged to contend: nor can he hope that this necessity could be removed by entering, at the present moment, into negotiation with those whom a fresh Revolution has so recently placed in the exercise of power in France.—Since no real advantage can arise from such negotiation to the great and desirable object of general peace, until it shall distinctly appear that those causes have ceased to operate, which originally produced the war, and by which it has since been protracted, and, in more than one instance, renewed.

The same system, to the prevalence of which France justly ascribes all her present miseries, is that which has also involved the rest of Europe in a long and destructive warfare, of a nature long since unknown to the practice of civilized nations.

For the extension of this system, and for the extermination of all established Governments, the resources of France have from year to year, and in the midst of the most unparalleled distress, been lavished and exhausted. To this indiscriminate spirit of destruction, the Netherlands, the United Provinces, the Swiss Cantons (His Majesty's ancient friends and allies), have successively been sacrificed. Germany has been ravaged: Italy, though now rescued from its invaders, has been made the scene of unbounded rapine and anarchy. His Majesty has himself been compelled to maintain an arduous and burthensome contest for the independence and existence of his kingdoms.

Nor have these calamities been confined to Europe alone: they have been extended to the most distant quarters of the world, and even to countries so remote, both in situation and interest, from the present contest, that the very existence of such a war was, perhaps, unknown to those who found themselves suddenly involved in all its horrors.

While such a system continues to prevail, and while the blood and treasure of a numerous and powerful nation can be lavished in its support, experience has shewn that no defence but that of open and ready hostility can be availing. The most solemn Treaties have only prepared the way for fresh aggression; and it is to a determined resistance alone that it now

due whatever remains in Europe of stability for property, for personal liberty, for social order, or for the free exercise of religion.

For the security, therefore, of these essential objects, His Majesty cannot place his reliance on the mere renewal of general professions of pacific dispositions. Such professions have been repeatedly held out by all those who have successively directed the resources of France to the destruction of Europe; and whom the present rulers have declared to have been all, from the beginning, and uniformly, incapable of maintaining the relations of amity and peace.

Greatly, indeed, will His Majesty rejoice, whenever it shall appear that the danger to which his own dominions, and those of his allies, have been so long exposed, has really ceased; whenever he shall be satisfied that the necessity of resistance is at an end; that after the experience of so many years of crimes and miseries, better principles have ultimately prevailed in France; and that all the gigantic projects of ambition, and all the restless schemes of destruction which have endangered the very existence of civil society, have at length been finally relinquished:—But the conviction of such a change, however agreeable to His Majesty's wishes, can result only from experience, and from the evidence of facts.

The best and most natural pledge of its reality and permanence, would be the restoration of that line of Princes which for so many centuries maintained the French nation in prosperity at home, and in consideration and respect abroad:—Such an event would at once have removed, and will at any time remove, all obstacles in the way of negotiation or peace. It would confirm to France the unmolested enjoyment of its ancient territory; and it would give to all the other nations of Europe, in tranquillity and peace, that security which they are now compelled to seek by other means.

But, desirable as such an event must be both to France and to the World, it is not to this mode exclusively that His Majesty limits the possibility of secure and solid pacification. His Majesty makes no claim to prescribe to France what shall be the form of her Government, or in whose hands she shall vest the authority necessary for conducting the affairs of a great and powerful nation.

His Majesty looks only to the security of his own dominions and those of his allies, and to the general safety of Europe. Whenever he shall judge that such security can in any manner be attained, as resulting either from the internal situation of that country, from whose internal situation the danger has arisen, or from such other circumstances of whatever nature as may produce the same end, His Majesty will eagerly embrace the opportunity to concert with his allies the means of immediate and general pacification.

Unhappily no such security hitherto exists: no sufficient evidence of the principles by which the new Government will be directed; no reasonable ground by which to judge of its stability. In this situation it can for the present only remain for His Majesty to pursue, in conjunction with other powers, those exertions of just and defensive war, which his regard to the happiness of his subjects will never permit him, either to continue beyond the necessity in which they originated, or to terminate on any other grounds, than such as may best contribute to the secure enjoyment of their tranquillity, their constitution, and their independence.

(Signed)

GRENVILLE.

Downing-Street, January 4, 1800.

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs, &c. &c. &c. at Paris.

No. V.

(TRANSLATION.)

*Letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs at Paris, to Lord Grenville.*MY LORD, *Paris, 24 Nivose, 8th year, Jan. 14, 1800.*

I lost no time in laying before the First Consul of the Republic the official note, under date of the 14th Nivose, which you transmitted to me; and I am charged to forward the answer, equally official, which you will find annexed.

Receive, my Lord, the assurance of my high consideration.

(Signed) CH. MAU. TALLEYRAND.

*To the Minister for Foreign Affairs
at London.*

No. VI.

(TRANSLATION.)

NOTE referred to in No. V.

The official note, under date of the 14th Nivose, the eighth year, addressed by the Minister of His Britannic Majesty, having been laid before the First Consul of the French Republic, he observed with surprize, that it rested upon an opinion which is not exact respecting the origin and consequences of the present war.—Very far from its being France which provoked it, she had, it must be remembered, from the commencement of her Revolution, solemnly proclaimed her love of peace and her disinclination to conquests, her respect for the independence of all Governments: and it is not to be doubted that, occupied at that time entirely with her own internal affairs, she would have avoided taking part in those of Europe, and would have remained faithful to her declarations.

But from an opposite disposition, as soon as the French Revolution had broken out, almost all Europe entered into a league for its destruction. The aggression was real, long time before it was public; internal resistance was excited; its opponents were favourably received; their extravagant declamations were supported; the French nation was insulted in the person of its agents; and England set particularly this example by the dismissal of the Minister accredited to her.—Finally, France was, in fact, attacked in her independence, in her honour, and in her safety, long time before the war was declared.

Thus it is to the projects of subjection, dissolution, and dismemberment, which were prepared against her, and the execution of which was several times attempted and pursued, that France has a right to impute the evils which she has suffered, and those which have afflicted Europe. Such projects, for a long time without example, with respect to so powerful a nation, could not fail to bring on the most fatal consequences.

Assailed on all sides, the Republic could not but extend universally the efforts of her defence; and it is only for the maintenance of her own independence that she has made use of those means which she possessed, in her own strength and the courage of her citizens. As long as she saw that her enemies obstinately refused to recognize her rights, she counted only upon the energy of her resistance; but as soon as they were obliged to

abandon the hope of invasion, she sought for means of conciliation, and manifested pacific intentions: and if these have not always been efficacious; if, in the midst of the critical circumstances of her internal situation, which the Revolution and the War have successively brought on, the former depositaries of the Executive Authority in France have not always shewn as much moderation as the Nation itself has shewn courage, it must, above all, be imputed to the fatal and persevering animosity with which the resources of England have been lavished to accomplish the ruin of France.

But if the wishes of His Britannic Majesty (in conformity with his assurances) are, in unison with those of the French Republic, for the re-establishment of peace, why, instead of attempting the apology of the war, should not attention be rather paid to the means of terminating it? And what obstacle can prevent a mutual understanding, of which the utility is reciprocal and is felt, especially when the First Consul of the French Republic has personally given so many proofs of his eagerness to put an end to the calamities of war, and of his disposition to maintain the rigid observance of all treaties concluded?

The First Consul of the French Republic would not doubt that His Britannic Majesty recognized the right of nations to choose the form of their Government, since it is from the exercise of this right that he holds his Crown; but he has been unable to comprehend how to this fundamental principle, upon which rests the existence of political societies, the Minister of His Majesty could annex insinuations which tend to an interference in the internal affairs of the Republic, and which are no less injurious to the French Nation and to its Government, than it would be to England and to His Majesty, if a sort of invitation were held out in favour of that Republican Government, of which England adopted the forms in the middle of the last century, or an exhortation to recall to the Throne that Family whom their birth had placed there, and whom a Revolution compelled to descend from it.

If at periods not far distant, when the constitutional system of the Republic presented neither the strength nor the solidity which it contains at present, His Britannic Majesty thought himself enabled to invite a negotiation and pacific conferences; how is it possible that he should not be eager to renew negotiations to which the present and reciprocal situation of affairs promises a rapid progress. On every side, the voice of nations and of humanity implores the conclusion of a war, marked already by such great calamities, and the prolongation of which threatens Europe with an universal convulsion and irremediable evils. It is, therefore, to put a stop to the course of these calamities, or in order that their terrible consequences may be reproached to those only who shall have provoked them, that the First Consul of the French Republic proposes to put an immediate end to hostilities, by agreeing to a suspension of arms, and naming Plenipotentiaries on each side, who should repair to Dunkirk, or any other town as advantageously situated for the quickness of the respective communications, and who should apply themselves without any delay to effect the re-establishment of peace and good understanding between the French Republic and England.

The First Consul offers to give the passports which may be necessary for this purpose.

(Signed)

CH. MAU. TALLEYRAND.

Paris, the 24th Nivose. (14th Jan. 1800.)

Eighth Year of the French Republic.

No. VII.

Letter from Lord Grenville, to the Minister for Foreign Affairs at Paris.

SIR,

Downing-Street, January 20, 1800.

I have the honour to inclose to you the answer which His Majesty has directed me to return to the official note which you transmitted to me.

I have the honour to be,

With high consideration,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

To the Minister for Foreign Affairs,

(Signed) **GRENVILLE.**

Et. Et. Et. at Paris.

No. VIII.

NOTE referred to in the preceding Number.

The official note transmitted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in France, and received by the undersigned on the 18th instant, has been laid before the King.

His Majesty cannot forbear expressing the concern with which he observes in that note, that the unprovoked aggressions of France, the sole cause and origin of the war, are systematically defended by her present rulers, under the same injurious pretences by which they were originally attempted to be disguised. His Majesty will not enter into the refutation of allegations now universally exploded, and (in so far as they respect His Majesty's conduct) not only in themselves utterly groundless, but contradicted both by the internal evidence of the transactions to which they relate, and also by the express testimony (given at the time) of the Government of France itself.

With respect to the object of the note, His Majesty can only refer to the answer which he has already given.

He has explained, without reserve, the obstacles which, in his judgment, preclude at the present moment all hope of advantage from negotiation. All the inducements to treat, which are relied upon in the French official note; the personal dispositions which are said to prevail for the conclusion of peace, and for the future observance of treaties; the power of insuring the effect of those dispositions, supposing them to exist; and the solidity of the system newly established, after so rapid a succession of Revolutions; all these are points which can be known only from that test to which His Majesty has already referred them—the result of experience, and the evidence of facts.

With that sincerity and plainness which his anxiety for the re-establishment of peace indispensably required, His Majesty has pointed out to France the surest and speediest means for the attainment of that great object. But he has declared in terms equally explicit, and with the same sincerity, that he entertains no desire to prescribe to a foreign nation the form of its Government; that he looks only to the security of his own dominions and of Europe; and that whenever that essential object can in his judgment be, in any manner whatever, sufficiently provided for, he will eagerly concert with his allies the means of immediate and joint negotiation for the re-establishment of general tranquillity.

To these declarations His Majesty steadily adheres, and it is only on the grounds thus stated, that his regard to the safety of his subjects will suffer him to renounce that system of vigorous defence, to which, under the favour of Providence, his kingdoms owe the security of those blessings which they now enjoy.

(Signed) GRENVILLE.

Downing-Street, January 20, 1800.

After these papers had been read, Lord GRENVILLE acquainted the House, that though he had yesterday mentioned Monday as a convenient day for taking His Majesty's message into consideration; yet, upon turning it in his mind, and understanding that the following day would be a still more convenient one to several noble Lords, he would beg to move, "That His Majesty's message be taken into consideration on Tuesday next, and that their Lordships be summoned for that day:"—which, meeting the general concurrence of the Lords present, was ordered accordingly.

Lord Grenville then presented a second message from His Majesty, relating to the accommodation of the Russian auxiliary troops in His Majesty's European dominions during the winter. It was as follows:

GEORGE R.

His Majesty thinks proper to acquaint the House of Commons, that a body of auxiliary Russian troops, employed with His Majesty's forces in the expedition to Holland, having necessarily been brought to these kingdoms at the close of the campaign, and the season of the year, and other circumstances, not having admitted of their being sent back to the dominions of the Emperor of Russia, His Majesty has taken measures, agreeably to treaty, for their being stationed during the winter in His Majesty's dominions; and that His Majesty has accordingly directed proper accommodations to be provided for them in the Islands of Guernsey and Jersey.

G. R.

His Lordship moved, that the foregoing message be taken into consideration on the same day with the first; which was ordered accordingly.

The Duke of Portland presented, by command of His Majesty, three recent orders of Council, respecting the importation of certain quantities of wheat corn and flour into the islands of Guernsey and Jersey; which were ordered to lie on the table.

The House then adjourned till Tuesday the 28th.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, January 22.

Mr. HUSKISSON moved for a variety of accounts relative to the revenues of the different presidencies in India, together with the charges of management, &c. : also, accounts of the charge attending the establishments at Fort Marlborough, St. Helena, &c. ; the probable resources and reimbursements ; the expence attending the pay and cloathing of the troops in India, &c. &c. All which were ordered.

Mr. ABBOT moved, that there be laid before the House an account of the amount of Exchequer, Navy, and Transport Bills : also, an account of the unfunded debt, up to January 5, 1800, and under the various heads of army, &c. &c. and what part of said debt was then unprovided for. — All which were ordered.

Mr. Chancellor PITT brought down a message from His Majesty, which was read by the Speaker from the chair :

[For a copy of this message, see the Proceedings of the House of Lords, in page 200.]

Mr. Chancellor PITT then moved, " That His Majesty's message be taken into the consideration of the House on Monday next."

Mr. TIERNEY, after observing that he had given notice of a motion for a call of the House, expressed a wish that the consideration of the momentous business which the right honourable gentleman had proposed for Monday, may be deferred till the day on which he intended to move that a call should take place. He did not conceive that so short a delay could prove of the least inconvenience to the progress of public business. If his wish on this point were agreed to, he would now forbear entering into any arguments to shew the necessity of a fuller attendance.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that it must be obvious to every gentleman, how unnecessary the motion intended to be made by the honourable gentleman was, and how dangerous the consequences were with which the proposed delay might be attended. The very face of the transaction itself showed how requisite it was to come as speedily a discussion and decision on these great points as possible; and any hesitation or uncertainty about that decision must appear strange in the eyes of Europe and of the world. The House would therefore feel, that it was not possible to admit so long an interval to intervene as that proposed by the honourable gentleman. Beside,

the communication made to His Majesty by the enemy had been long known to the public at large ; and the House and the Public must feel that this fact was the best notice that could be given for a full attendance, for it involved the great question of peace or war, and that at a moment when this question was of greater interest and importance than ever. Those who felt as they ought, the full importance of such ponderous interests, would be sure to attend from a due sense of their duty, without the necessity imposed upon them by enforcing a call. He must therefore oppose the motion as altogether unnecessary, and object to any delay of so pressing a subject beyond the day he had already proposed.

Mr. TIERNEY professed himself not satisfied with these observations, and said, that he would make his intended motion as soon as the papers were laid upon the table.

Mr. Chancellor PITT then presented the Papers containing the late correspondence between the French Government and His Majesty's Ministers.

[Copies or Translations of all which will be found in the Lord's Proceedings, p. 200.]

He then moved, that they be taken into consideration on the same day as His Majesty's message.—Agreed to.

Mr. TIERNEY now rose, and said, that nothing which had fallen from the right honourable gentleman was sufficiently convincing to dissuade him from the motion of which he had given notice. He would still persist in it, without thinking it necessary to answer the objections urged against it by the right honourable gentleman. If the arguments of that right honourable gentleman were good, then that House had been in error from time immemorial—for Calls of the House were surely not unusual on such occasions. It was far from his wish or intention to harass Members by any motion of that nature, and he trusted they would not suspect him capable of entertaining such a desire. He thought, however, that a full attendance should be enforced on these great occasions, if not during the whole of the Session ; for he would ask gentlemen, whether there ever came before Parliament business of more magnitude and importance than that which was to occupy their attention this Session ? When his honourable friend (Mr. Sheridan) gave notice of his motion for an inquiry into the causes which produced the failure of the late expedition against Holland, he imagined that question of sufficient moment to justify a Call of the House. To whom the blame of that fatal failure was to be imputed, he would not now stop to examine ; but surely it was an event that sufficiently affected the honour and interest of the country to justify a Call of the House for

the day on which a matter of such high consideration was to be discussed. On that day, however, he might not be disposed to enforce a Call; for there were other questions behind that, which would require an equally general attendance and attention. Among others, there was the question of the Union with Ireland, and the introduction into that House of, it was supposed, one hundred Members. Indeed a vast variety of important questions were expected to come under consideration during the Session, and he could not suppose he should harass any individual by calling the attention of every Member to the discussion of such momentous points. The generality of gentlemen had no great cause of complaint on this point. They should feel for the state to which the country was reduced; for it was a melancholy fact, that during these three years past he had never seen one half of the House present, even at the discussion of the most important questions. He must therefore persist in moving, That the House be called over on Wednesday, the 4th of February.

Mr. JONES seconded the motion. With due submission to the right honourable gentleman who opposed it, he could not think him justified in that opposition, unless he brought forward better arguments than those which he used against a similar motion for a Call, which was moved for in order to give a full discussion to a most important bill, and which he conceived to be the ground of the disastrous expedition against Holland. If the failure of that expedition did not require to be examined into by the collective wisdom of the British Legislature, he was at a loss to conceive what could. It was far from his intention to give any unnecessary trouble to gentlemen; but he now supported the motion for a Call of the House on the same grounds that he opposed the late long adjournment, and he would continue to support it, though he were left in the minority of only himself and the honourable mover, as had been the case on a former occasion. There were many urgent and important questions which imperiously claimed the attention and the collective sense of that *National Assembly* (*a laugh*). Here Mr. Jones confessed, that he did not possess that command of words for which the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt), and perhaps those around him, were distinguished; but he would nevertheless manifest the deep sense which he felt of his duty as a Member of Parliament; and would persevere in contending, that several important questions loudly called for the collective sense of the House of Commons; especially the great and alarming scarcity which now prevailed of the necessaries of life, and which arose from that great evil, a monopoly of corn, coals and hops, which the wisdom and vigilance of Parlia-

ment should hasten to correct and extinguish. The nation loudly called for some forcible laws to correct this evil, and the call of the nation should be listened to. For his part, he had never witnessed a full House but on one occasion, and that was upon a bill respecting *Partridges*. On that occasion, indeed, gentlemen were observed to attend in coveys. He hoped they would do so on the present occasion.

The MASTER OF THE ROLLS opposed the motion. During the time that he had the honour of a seat in Parliament, he had never seen any good arise from a Call. The attendance on such occasions was not greater than when there was no Call. He saw no use in a Call, except as it held out a notice that some matter of importance was to come under discussion; if any other purpose was expected from it, he had never observed that it was answered by it. As to the particular question of War or Peace, that was to be discussed on Monday next, and therefore a Call of the House, such as that proposed, was unnecessary for that discussion. The expedition against Holland was the other question, and he was ready to confess it to be one of the deepest and most home-felt importance; but its very importance would bring together as full an attendance as may be; besides, it had been long and generally understood, that these great questions were to come before Parliament immediately upon their meeting. Upon this ground did he agree to so early a day as Monday for the consideration of His Majesty's communication. It appeared then, that these two important questions would be disposed of before the proposed Call of the House could have any effect. Unless the present motion was intended to enforce a full attendance during the whole Session, he did not see the use of it, otherwise than as a notice; and on that ground he would oppose it.

Mr. TIERNEY conceived that the learned gentleman misrepresented him; but, no doubt, unintentionally. He had merely said, in answer to something that had fallen from the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt), that, perhaps, he would not enforce the Call upon the day appointed, but postpone it to a future day, when important business was to come on. As to the question itself, it was admitted that a Call, on some occasions, might be beneficial; and if there were those who did not feel that the motion he had alluded to was of sufficient importance (he meant that which was to inquire into the cause why an army of 50,000 men was compelled to ransom their return); if there were any, he said, who did not think such a question called for the fullest possible attendance, from them he could not expect any concurrence in his opinion; but from

those who felt otherwise, and who were alive to the honour of their country, he trusted he should meet with proper support.

The House then divided; when there appeared, Against the motion, 115; for the motion, 32. Majority against it, 83.

List of the MINORITY

On the Motion for a Call of the House.

Baker, W.

Bird, W. W.

Biddulph, R.

Brogden, J.

Browne, Hon. S.

Burdett, Sir F.

Dennison, Joseph

Dent, J.

Dickens, F.

Dickenfon, W.

Edwards, B.

Galcoyne, Isaac

Geary, Sir W.

Hobhouse, Benjamin

Jefferys, N.

Jolliffe, W.

Jones, T.

Keene, W.

Levada, Lord G.

Martin, James

Milner, Sir W.

Nicholls, John

North, Dudley

Plumet, William

Pollen, G. A.

Russell, Lord William

St. John, Hon. St. A.

Shakespeare, G.

Sinclair, Sir John

Stanley, Thomas

Tufton, Hon. Henry

Western, C. C.

Wigley, E.

TELLERS,

Jekyll, J.

Tierney, Geo.

Mr. ABBOT moved for certain accounts belonging to the departments of the Ordnance and Victualling Offices, as far as they were connected with the proceedings of the Committee of Finance, to be laid before the House by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

Mr. WALLACE thought himself bound to object to the motion, as it might seem to cast some imputation on the conduct of the Lords of the Admiralty, and more especially as there was already an order that the papers now called for should be laid before the House at the beginning of the Session, when all their proceedings were regularly to be laid before Parliament. The present motion he therefore thought superfluous, or as having no other tendency than to throw an annotated reflection on the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

Mr. ABBOT disclaimed any such intention, and was ready, on the contrary, to bestow the highest praise on the vigilance and ad-

tivity of those who, so much to the honour and the safety of their country, now presided over that department. His only object was the introduction of certain arrangements into the Ordnance and Victualling Offices, which it had some time since been promised should take place.

After a few words in explanation between Mr. Abbot and Mr. Wallace, the motion was agreed to.

Mr. Chancellor PITT then moved, that the House at its rising should adjourn to Monday next, that gentlemen should have time and leisure to examine the nature and tendency of the important business which was on that day to come under their consideration.

The motion was agreed to, and the House accordingly adjourned till Monday next.

Monday, January 27.

Mr. Nepean brought up several accounts from the Admiralty, which had been moved for by Mr. Abbot.

Mr. Long presented several accounts relative to Finance, which were ordered to be printed.

On account of the indisposition of Mr. Chancellor Pitt, the Order of the Day, for taking into consideration His Majesty's Message, &c. was deferred to Wednesday.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, January 28.

Several accounts, directed to be annually laid before Parliament, were presented from the Commissioners of the Customs, and ordered to lie upon the table.

The Order of the Day for taking His Majesty's Message into consideration being read.

Lord GREENVILLE rose, and observed, that the question which noble Lords were then summoned to consider was one of the most momentous and important that ever came under the deliberation of Parliament. No comments of his could be wanting, therefore, to heighten the interest of that discussion which would necessarily arise from it. So much was already known to the House concerning the present state of this country and of Europe, and such had been the declarations from time to time of those of their Lordships who, with him, saw the necessity and justice of the war in which we were en-

gaged, that for him to detain their Lordships that evening to any great length, by stating arguments to support the motion he should have the honour to propose, would be to arraign the justice of those declarations, and to appear to doubt the policy of those determinations which resulted from them. Their Lordships had, in their repeated addresses, laid at the foot of the Throne the demonstrations of their perfect acquiescence in the propriety of those measures which the servants of the Crown had thought it most consistent with their duty, and with the real interests of the country, to recommend and adopt. Unfortunately the same necessity still existed for persevering in the contest. Nothing in the state and posture of the affairs of Europe admitted of a rational hope that for this country, or for Europe, there was any security but in war. In saying this, in calling on their Lordships to concur with him in opinion, he would be understood to make the appeal to those of them only who always concurred with him; for to those who never did admit the necessity and the justice of the war, to those who never had approved of the conduct and concurred in the sentiments of His Majesty's Ministers, who concurred not, indeed, with all the thinking part of the nation, who would not even concur with mankind, he would make no appeal; on them he would not that night call for co-operation or support. It was not possible to have made the study of the present condition of the world a principal care, without perceiving that a hostile mind still pervades the whole conduct of the enemy. From the documents on their Lordships' table, the truth of that proposition was obvious. It was obvious, that the same proneness to aggression, the same disregard to justice, still actuated the conduct of the men who rule in France. Under such circumstances, there could be no security for Europe in peace. Peace with a nation whose war was made against all order, all religion, all morality, would be rather a cessation of resistance to wrong than a suspension of arms in the nature of ordinary warfare. Hence it was incumbent on that House and the Country to persevere with increased vigour in the contest. It was incumbent on their Lordships to renew that night the pledge of their support of His Majesty's Crown, and of all the dearest and best interests of Englishmen. It was incumbent on their Lordships to give to Europe and the World, demonstrations of that unyielding and undaunted spirit which has maintained Great Britain, and succoured surrounding nations, in their great struggle against the arms, and worse than the arms, the insidious levelling principles of France. No man could read the papers on the table, coupled with the real conduct and apparent

views of that country — no man could gravely and with discrimination reflect on the professions and acts of the rulers of that Republic, without feeling that no defence could be effectual but what was planned with the decision, and maintained with the vigour of war. It was in war, therefore, that ourselves and the great civil community of Europe were to find security. It was in war, too, as he most confidently hoped and believed, that France was to find the full measure of punishment for her crimes. There was then no course for the House to take, but to support His Majesty in the prosecution of those measures of just defence which the urgency of the crisis rendered inevitable, and which the nature of our situation required. But though he could see no wise course which men wishing the prosperity of their country could pursue, but war, he nevertheless felt that peace might be, would indeed be, a blessing. In other periods of the world, when the differences between nations arose only from customary difficulties, from causes not overgrowing the laws and the acknowledged rights of nations, but springing from ordinary events, the work of peace was always undertaken with readiness, and persevered in with zeal. In these times, when the differences that agitate States are of no common origin, when, indeed, they are the offspring of a mad and maddening spirit of innovation, the work of peace must be entered on with caution, and pursued with jealousy. Thus, to negotiate with established Governments, was formerly not merely easy, but under most circumstances safe; but to negotiate with the Government of France now, would be to incur all the risks of an uncertain truce, without attaining one of the benefits even of a temporary peace. Yet, were it not in contradiction to all experience, to believe, that a peace with that Republic is attainable and is safe, so much did he lament the miseries of war, that he would try negotiation. Their Lordships might believe him, when he spoke their sentiments; they might believe that he deplored how much nations were disturbed, were ravaged and oppressed in the progress of obstinate and hard contested war. He deplored the sufferings of the nations of Europe; he deplored the loss of the lives of those brave men who fell fighting the battles of their country; he deplored the spreading misery in States the seat of war; all these things and more he deplored; but he knew not how otherwise to avert still greater evils, to cut off the entail of human misery, than by persevering in virtuous and energetic hostility against a power which sought the dominion, and, with that, the destruction of the world. Besides these most important considerations, there were other reasons which

powerfully influenced him in wishing for peace. He was personally interested, as were those other persons who with him formed the administration of the country. By peace, they would be relieved from much labour, much anxiety, much personal responsibility, while they saw in that event the pledge of tranquillity and prosperity to their country. But this must be a peace with all the attributes of peace. It must be a peace with a Government and People formed and accustomed to preserve and maintain the relations of amity.

The existing Government of France appeared to him not of this character; and until he could tell their Lordships and the country, until he could tell Europe, that he saw in the temper and conduct of the enemy the return of genuine moderation, and of good principles, he must with all its horrors, and great undoubtedly they must always be, prefer war. Nor did he doubt but those were the sentiments of the majority of that House, as, when the character of the enemy was rightly understood, they could not fail to be the sentiments of the great body of the people. He was not apprehensive, therefore, that the motion he should presently submit would meet with material opposition. In substance, that motion would give to His Majesty a pledge of the unchanged and unalterable affection of that House, while the continued support of Parliament, the assurances of the zeal and unanimity of his people, would yield that animating sanction to perseverance and to constancy, which must add weight to opinion, and give energy and effect to such measures as may be adopted to conduct the great contest in which His Majesty is engaged to a safe and honourable conclusion. There were two principles material to the question, which directly resulted from this statement, and which must form the basis of all discussion on it. The first was, that France still retained those sentiments, and shewed that constancy to those views, which characterised and marked the dawn, and continues to march with the progress of her Revolution. She was innovating, she is still so;—she was Jacobin, she is still so;—she was faithless to treaty, she is still so;—she declared war against all Kings, she continues to seek the destruction of all Kings. But he would state the facts, and their Lordships would judge of the exactness of his conclusions. Before doing this, it was more in order to state the second principle from whence to reason: and that was, that no safe, honourable, and permanent peace could be made with France in her present situation, and with her present rulers. Now, what were the facts on which the first of these principles rested for proof and support. The whole history of a war provoked by the

ambition and restless spirit of France, and continued in order to check her devastating progress, may be read instructively for documents and facts. We were, however, to reason from past experience and from present appearances. We were to reason not only from what we knew of the destructive march of the Revolution over the fairest portions of Europe, through America, in Africa, and over Asia ; but the recent and public declaration of the Rulers in the last of their usurpations, is to form a pregnant source of evidence of the same spirit disguised under new forms, yet changed in form only ; for still we might mark their devotion to the unity of the end. In the note of M. Talleyrand we found it asserted, that, " from the commencement of her Revolution, the Republic solemnly proclaimed her love of peace, her disinclination to conquests, and her respect for the independence of all Governments." Those were the words of the French Minister in the note on their Lordships' table ; but how stood the facts ? " Solemnly proclaimed her love of peace," and yet this love of peace, so solemnly proclaimed, was manifested in being at war in the course of eight years with every nation in Europe, except two (Sweden and Denmark), and next to being at war with America. Was it in this that their Lordships would find it proved that France had changed her sentiments, and adopted pacific views ? If love of peace were eagerness for war, then might M. Talleyrand well urge it in favour of his Government, that the Republic solemnly proclaimed her love of peace. But not only was the Republic at war with all the nations of Europe, except the two already named, but is at this moment, if not at war, at least on terms of threatening hostility with one of those two States. Their Lordships would conjecture that he here alluded to Sweden, whose ambassador recently quitted the metropolis of the Republic with precipitation, and the probability of his being replaced was very doubtful. On the other hand, if war has not been formerly declared by France against those two northern powers, their subjects, and the commerce carried on by them, have suffered in aggravated instances from the cruizers of the Republic (whose depredations found sanction from her laws), a series of injuries, of insults, and injustice ; tolerable in war, because common to it ; but most intolerable in peace, because directly repugnant to the principles of any just peace or recognized neutrality. He had already remarked, that even America could not escape that ravaging Republic. The fact had indeed been, that next to a state of active and inveterate war, was the state of those two Republics for a long time. Then surely it was not in those facts that noble Lords were to look for

proofs that the principles and views of the Republic were at length changed from wild, anarchic and destructive hostility, to the cherished establishments of civilized community, to the habits of meekness, moderated ambition, and tempered pride; to a system, in short, of justice and love of order, which were to make peace desirable, because it might be obtained in the spirit of peace, and with the guarantee of justice for the permanence of its stipulations, and of the rights and liberties of Europe and mankind. These, however, were not the only facts he had to state as proofs of the hostile mind and innovating views of the Government of France. The war was an aggression of justice in its origin, and began its progress with every demonstration of injustice. No single act of their Government was free from the direct charge of meditated oppression, or matured contempt for the laws of nations and the rights of individuals. Would then any man hereafter state it in the face of their Lordships, and of Europe, that the original character of the Republic is wholly changed, that security for peace is to be seen in their more recent declarations and conduct? But how is it with this other assertion in the note of their Minister, "The Republic proclaimed her disinclination to conquest." She did; and we have accordingly seen her march her armies to the Rhine, seize the Netherlands, and annex them (if that were possible) for ever to the Republic. Have not we witnessed her progress in Italy? Are not the wrongs of Switzerland recent and marked? Do we in those transactions discover that disinclination to conquest which the Republic proclaimed? But it is not in Europe only that France has developed her plan of dominion and her projects of conquest! Even into Asia has she carried her arms, and separated from the Porte a vast portion of its empire? It is not then in her disinclination to conquest that we are to find the pledge of altered sentiments, the manifestation of moderate views and principles—"The Republic proclaimed her respect for the independence of all Governments." We had here (his Lordship said) a very important inquiry, on entering upon which it was right to observe, that nations at war (and nations too at war to add to their territory by conquest) might in many cases respect the independence of other nations. It is not necessarily the condition on which new provinces are conquered, that the conqueror shall violate the independence of those provinces. States may, indeed, change their rulers, but the form and spirit of the general and established institutions may be respected and preserved. Hence could the right of France to extend her line of territory by conquest be admitted, still would it be a violation by her of the laws and

rights of nations not to respect the independence of other States. But, with the right of conquest denied her (as how could a Government, itself an usurpation, the creation of a day, possess that right), her interference in the internal Government of other nations, her aggressions on the rights, and violation of the independence of other States, added to the criminality and deepened the atrocity of her conduct. Did not Jacobin France attempt the overthrow of every Government? Did not Jacobin France arm governors against the governed; and when her politics suited it, did not she arm the governed against the governors? What had been her conduct in Switzerland? In Italy the whole scheme of civil society was changed, and the independence of every Government violated. The Netherlands, too, remain to exhibit to mankind monuments of the awful veneration with which the Republic has regarded the independence of other States. Was it part of the system formed to give permanence to their abhorrence of all interference with the internal Government of other countries, to their respect for the independence of all other nations, to publish their memorable decree of November 1792. That decree had not slept a dead letter on their statute book. No, it was still the active energetic principle of their whole conduct. It was that principle on which they acted when they dethroned Kings and plundered Princes. It was that principle which, still strong and still indefatigable, every Monarch in Europe must arm himself to resist and overcome. The whole world was interested in the extinction of that principle for ever. Having thus stated the question in these various views, with much force and eloquence, his Lordship claimed it as the fair result of the facts he adduced, that the assertions of the Minister of France were contradicted and proved to be false, by a reference to the events of the war, and to the history of the rise and progress of the Revolution. The assertions of M. Talleyrand being the declaration in great part of the altered sentiments and views of the Rulers of France, their Lordships would readily perceive in the refutation of those assertions, a proof also of the hollowness of that declaration. They would perceive that, far from having renounced all views of aggrandizement, far from being willing to respect the independence of other nations, far from being sincere in her proclamation of a love of peace, she is still Jacobin France, that France that urged Europe to a cruel and destructive war, that has accumulated province on province, overthrown State after State, outraged the rights of humanity, and trampled on and destroyed the laws and the constitutions of other nations. The application of all this to his first prin-

ciple, his Lordship considered inevitable. The House must have felt, that every fact in the whole series tended directly to prove that no change had taken place in the genuine sentiments and views of the Government of France. How truly the second principle was founded on just conceptions of the views and conduct of the Republic, would appear presently. It would appear, "that no safe, honourable, and permanent peace could be made with France in her present situation, and with her present Rulers." The proofs in this case were numerous. Every power with whom the Republic had treated, whether for armistice or for peace, could furnish melancholy instances of the perfidy of France, and of the ambition, injustice, and cruelty of her Rulers. Did she agree to a suspension of arms, it was in order to be admitted into the state of the negotiating Prince, that she might the more successfully undermine his Throne, by corrupting the principles of his subjects. She has only wished for an armistice as a truce, in the course of which she was to plan the disorganization of feeble States, to excite the people to rebellion, depose the magistrates, and seize on the revenues and force of powers for whom she had vowed eternal friendship. In no stage of their progress have her generals disguised that they entered neighbouring countries only to despoil the rich of their inheritances; and even poverty itself has been stripped of her rags, of those relics of wretchedness which the storm had not quite torn away, that the Republic might yet persevere in her war of extermination to all people and to all Kings. The fate of Switzerland, of that brave, honest and generous people, was in the recollection of noble Lords. Switzerland concluded a truce with the Republic; the Republic excited insurrections in Switzerland; overthrew her institutions; oppressed her people with contributions; degraded, deposed, or exiled her magistracy; seized on her strong places; assumed the command of her armies; and, to give permanence to the usurpation, imposed on her a Government not new merely in form but in name. Here was a striking illustration of the good faith which the Republic observed towards powers with whom she concluded armistices. If again armistice has been followed by negotiation for peace, negotiation for peace has seldom been productive of much else than protracted ruin, or has been the prelude to more destructive war. The history of her negotiations was the history of wickedness, the record of crimes. It was the teeming annals of hollow, deep, inflexible perfidy, of treaties made to be violated without shame, and of alliances formed to be outraged without remorse. Through all Europe these truths were acknowledged, because through all Europe the effects had been felt, and deprecated, of the terrible wreck of Thrones and the

overthrow of States, which were the issues of French alliance and the pledges of French faith. The Grand Duke of Tuscany was among the early sufferers by a treaty of peace with the Republic: In every thing that abused Prince strove to conform his conduct to the views of France; but the train had been laid, and, at a moment when the honour of the Republic was pledged for the security of his State, he saw the troops of his ally enter his capital, the Governor of that city (Florence) imprisoned, his subjects in a state of rebellion, and himself about to be exiled from his dominions. It was to this Prince, however, that the Republic repeated her assurances of attachment; but the Republic that sought not conquest, that would not interfere with the Government of other States, deposed the Sovereign, and gave a democracy to the Florentines. The King of Sardinia opened the gates of his capital to the Republican arms, and, confiding in the integrity of the French Government, expected to find his possessions guaranteed by the treaty which recognised his title and his rights, and which guaranteed to France adequate advantages. He was forced to resign his continental dominions, while the city of Turin was treacherously taken possession of by the Republicans. History would record these events with the minuteness which belong to them, and in that succession in which, to the misfortune of all nations, they opened on mankind. The change of the Papal Government was part of that system. It was schemed by Joseph Bonaparte in his palace; and after that Ambassador had excited an insurrection, we saw the Revolution effected by him at the head of the Roman mob. In the example of Naples was displayed the same contempt of the laws of war and of the rights of peace. The King of that State might have hoped, that towards him the faith of treaty would be observed; for he had done nothing to provoke the wrath or excite the cupidity of the Republic. It was true, indeed, that a war broke out between that Prince and the Roman Republic; but was there a man living who doubted but that that Republic, in itself neither inclined nor prepared to commence a war, was instigated by France to provoke hostilities? The subsequent events of the war most fully proved that France was in reality the author of it; for no sooner did the armies of these two States take the field, than the Republicans joined the troops of Rome, and, not satisfied with defending the capitol, carried their pillaging and destroying arms into the heart of Naples. Fortunately, those Sovereigns had regained their dominions; but so deep had the principles of anarchy and disloyalty been every where sown, that not even at this hour were the States of Italy in possession of half the comforts of peace; nay, it might be feared that they experienced rather those hardships which

are the concomitants of war. Prussia could not be fairly said to have sustained no infraction of the rights of peace, though Prussia might possibly be considered as having peculiarly shared the tender solicitude of the Republic, to avoid war. It was five years since France and the Court of Berlin ceased to be enemies in the field ; but those who knew what was the sensation produced at that Court at the time, could clearly see an infraction of the faith of treaty in the proceedings of France towards Hamburgh. In this city, whose independence Prussia guarantees, the agents of the Republic imposed and levied large contributions ; and all Europe must be convinced that Prussia regarded such conduct as a violation of the pledged friendship of France. Look at Holland and Spain, her allies, or rather her tributaries : how had her treaties with them been observed ? The privateers and armed vessels of the Republic, that swarm of Buccaneers fitted out to pirate the trade of the whole world, took and carried into the ports of France the vessels of those friendly powers. This was not all ; for, in contempt of the acknowledged law of nations, the Republic decreed the property of the subjects of her allies lawful prizes, and, to fill the measure of injustice, even appointed Consuls in the ports of those very States to regulate the commerce in captured commodities—in the commodities of an allied Republic, and an allied kingdom. Reverting to the intercourse of the Republic with the States of the Empire, the same want of faith was to be discovered throughout. The armistice concluded by the Archduke with the General of the Republic, was succeeded by the treaty of Campo-Formio ; and was this treaty better observed than any of those which went before ? It generated the causes of the war which now rages for the second time through Europe. The Republics of Italy, that might have hoped to find some indulgence from the Republicans of France, were next outraged and overthrown by the same arts which we saw successful against Princes. After concluding the business of the armistice with the Emperor, and the subsequent preliminaries to a treaty, the French directed their arms against Venice. Here they proclaimed that they came as deliverers who would release them from the yoke of Austria, which, according to the French Generals, had long insulted, betrayed, and oppressed the Republican Venetians ; but it was a mere proclamation ; for in no long time was the Republic raised by themselves annihilated, and Venice sold to that very Emperor whose vaunted aggressions and extortions afforded the original pretext for the invasion of the French. Genoa received them as friends ; and that the debt of gratitude might be paid in the style of the new school, Genoa was revolutionized, and a new Government hurried up, while, under the

authority of a mock Constitution, we saw the people plundered and the country pillaged. But if injustice against Princes and Aristocracies forms part of the creed of the modern revolutionist, was justice better observed towards the Republics raised especially under the wings of France, her own offspring, and affiliated with her? Was it in any or in all these facts that noble Lords saw the security to this country from a peace concluded with such a power? But it would be said, that those were not the acts of France more than they were inevitably the result of a state of war. This was easily answered by a reference to the report of a principal Member of the New Government, who tells the Committee of Elders, that neither the Revolutionary nor the Constitutional Government was capable of maintaining the relations of friendship and peace with the powers of Europe; that treaties (as with Austria) were only made to be broken; and that there was no security for Europe, or even the Republic itself, while such a mass of absurdity, of folly, and error, continued to form the basis of the Government. So much did the actors in the last revolution believe the statement of this reporter (Boulay de la Meurthe), that they founded their claims to the approbation and assent of the people of France, on the declaration that their Government is founded on a just view of those vices and defects, and on principles which are to stop the revolutions of the Republican order. If then the declarations of the Rulers of France so entirely support all that His Majesty's Ministers have from time to time stated on the subject of war and peace, what other course would wisdom bid Great Britain adopt, but await the event of things, to await the result of future experience, and not to enter on negotiation at a time when no one advantage can fairly be expected from it? To attempt to negotiate, would in fact be to impeach all former decisions, to libel the past declarations of that House, and to libel the good sense and spirit of the people of England; but, above all, it would betray the interests of our allies at a moment when the whole world hails with impatience the renewal of that vigorous resistance to the aggressions of France, which has already produced such signal good, and which, under the blessing of God, may yet lead to the deliverance of Europe from the principles and the arms of the common enemy of man. Thus long he had detained their Lordships attention to a mere statement of facts; and so conclusive did those facts appear to him, that he would not attempt to diversify their aspect by arguments. He had observed with how much grave attention their Lordships followed him in his statement; and he would now assume, as proved most completely, the two propositions above stated. There had just occurred to him a topic which, in the

order of just arrangement, should have preceded much of what he had been stating. This was the assertion in the note of M. Talleyrand, that this country was the original aggressor in the war. Here his Lordship entered into the detail of that question, and reiterated with great ability the arguments of Ministers to prove that France was the aggressor. He disclaimed all alliance and connection with any power or powers whatever for the purpose of overthrowing the Government of France, especially the pretended treaties of Pavia and Pilnitz; and observed, that so far was the Emperor from meditating such interference, that he expressly notified to all the Courts of Europe, that he considered the acceptance of the new French Constitution by the King as the proper act of the King. The effect of this declaration was, however, but too soon felt by his Imperial Majesty; for in 1792, when the French invaded his dominions, so unprepared was he, that the Netherlands speedily fell into the hands of the Republic. England not only did not mean to interfere with the internal affairs of France, but actually authorised her Ministers on the Continent to become the mediators between the powers at war. Even M. Chauvelin himself, and M. Talleyrand, admitted this. In fact, the latter in his declaration as an Ambassador contradicted his declaration as a Minister. Here his Lordship took a general view of the correspondence at that period, and insisted that in all respects it proved the aggression to have originated with France. He next took a view of the limited question of the practicability of negotiation at this time, and maintained that the reception of our Ambassador at Paris and at Lisle, the final result of the negotiations there attempted, and the present temper and conduct of the Government of France, were such as not to warrant any man in considering negotiation practicable. But suppose negotiation even practicable, were we quite sure that it would not be turned against us into an engine of destruction? Had not the same thing happened to other nations, and did we all at once forget the sworn hatred of the Jacobins against England? Here his Lordship commented with much success on the note of the French Minister; and with respect to the assertion in it, that the powers of Europe had originally provoked the Republic (by refusing to recognize her) "to the exertion of her own strength and of the courage of her citizens." His Lordship observed, that more was meant in the original than could be expressed in any translation with appropriate spirit and phrase. It was an artful insinuation, that the Republic was dragged into the war; but the spirit of the original was, that she carried her arms into neutral States, to make her claims valid against nations at war. In other words, if a neutral State would not commit aggressions on States at

war with the Republic, or supply the wants of her soldiers, she was to resort to the exertion of her strength, and the courage of her citizens, to subjugate and plunder them. It was in this spirit that they invaded and seized on Egypt; and in the same spirit might England expect to be invaded, if, unlike the other powers of Europe, which, unfortunately for them, surround the Republic, we were not separated by a Channel that, under God, will ever be impassable. The words in the note which appeared to him so insidious and ominous were, *Affaillie de tout Part, la Republique a du porter par tout les Efforts de sa Defensve*. His Lordship having expatiated on these different topics with great ability, and enforced his arguments with uncommon clearness and energy, proceeded to an investigation of the degree of credit to which the personal character of Bonaparte could be considered as justly entitled.

“ Let us now, my Lords, examine the proofs, the recorded evidences, of which we are in possession, and which will enable us to form a correct opinion of the personal good faith of the First Consul. We shall not be destitute of sufficient grounds for judging what degree of reliance is to be placed on his present promises and professions, from considering his past actions, if we trace General Bonaparte from the period when, in the third year of the Republic, he imposed upon the French people, by the mouth of the cannon, that very Constitution which he has now destroyed by the point of the bayonet. In this consideration I am certainly spared a great deal of detail by the previous statements which I have given to your Lordships of the acts of the French General himself, or of those immediately executed under his command. If a treaty was concluded and broken with Sardinia, it was concluded and broken by Bonaparte—if peace was entered into and violated with Tuscany, it was entered into and violated by Bonaparte—if armistices were ratified and annulled with Modena, and the other petty States of Italy, they were ratified and annulled by Bonaparte—if Venice was first drawn into the war, and afterwards forced to conclude a treaty of peace, that antient Republic was drawn into it and compelled to conclude peace by Bonaparte, that he might with more ease overthrow her Constitution, and annihilate the political system by which she had been enabled to exist with glory and security for ages—if the Government of Rome was terrified into terms of negotiation, and forced to conclude the treaty of Tolentino, that Government was also subverted by Bonaparte—if Genoa was reduced to the same humiliating situation, her wealth and her independence were sacrificed to the will of Bonaparte—if Switzerland was induced to surrender up her rights and liberties by the delusive offers of peace

and alliance, she was deprived of them by Bonaparte ; for his ambitious and perfidious designs were carried into execution in that country by General Brune, the same Commander whom the First Consul has selected to head the army dispatched to reduce the inhabitants of La Vendée. Even the affiliated Republics were equally the victims of his destructive perfidy. The Constitution of the Cisalpine Republic, which was the work of Bonaparte, was overthrown by the hands of his General, Berthier. But this is not all, my Lords ; let us now pass from the Continent of Europe, and try if the subsequent conduct of the First Consul can furnish any grounds more satisfactory to give us a favourable opinion of his sincerity. When he arrived at Malta, he held the same specious promises of good faith, by which he had so frequently succeeded in betraying States and Governments ; but he treated that island as a conquered country, and despoiled it of every thing that was valuable. I now come to his proceedings in Egypt. It would be very unnecessary for me to detain your Lordships by details with which you are already too well acquainted ; but I cannot avoid calling your attention to that part of his conduct which is diplomatic. I shall, of course, pass over his deceitful professions, his rapacities, and the cruel massacres which were perpetrated by his troops, and by his immediate orders. He solemnly declared to the Porte, that he had no intention to take possession of Egypt ; he declared to his own Generals, that his object was to take possession of that country ; and he assured the people of Egypt that he had taken possession of it with the consent of the Porte. What can we think of his blasphemies, his hypocrisies, his repeated acts of perfidy, his multiplied violations of all religious and moral ties ? Did he not declare, in the most unqualified terms, that the French were true Mussulmen ? Is it in that country that he has laid the foundation for us to rest with security upon the good faith and sincerity which he now professes ? Having, therefore, such bases for us to form a correct opinion of his policy, can it be thought inconsistent to believe that he has no intention of fulfilling his engagements ? Can we so soon forget his delicate apprehensions with respect to the lives of his remaining soldiers after his flight, and his directions to General Kleber to propose preliminaries of peace to the Porte ; to enter into a treaty of peace, and to defer the execution of the articles ? “ You may (says he, in his official letter) sign a treaty to evacuate Egypt ; but do not execute the articles, as you may observe with great plausibility, that it must be sent home, in order to be submitted to the inspection and ratification of the Directory.”—Thus, my Lords, we are in complete possession of his system of politics, a system as fraudulent, perfidious,

and destructive, as ever was practised, to the disgrace and misery of human nature. Thus are we provided with unquestionable pledges of his future integrity. In the correspondence which appears upon your table, his motives are open and undisguised; and there is not the least necessity for having recourse to conjecture to ascertain that he has a double object in his communication. The one is to amuse Great Britain, and the other to induce her to give offence to her allies. I hope I shall not be accused of entertaining any unfounded jealousy of such a man, who, having done nothing to redeem his good faith, so often violated, but the overturning the Government of his country by the terror of military despotism, now comes forward with proposals of pacification. When we are fully satisfied with the share which he has had in previous aggressions and depredations, can we be too slow in giving him credit for professions of sincerity? Will any security be found in his personal assurances? If his interest be deeply concerned, I grant, indeed, that he may be sincere: but let us for a moment examine this question. I have heard it reported as a matter of opinion, that it is the peculiar interest of the First Consul to make peace, and that we consequently were bound to turn that consideration to our own advantage, and meet the overture which has been made to us. It is hardly necessary for me to remark, that in this important business there are three distinct steps to which our attention should naturally be directed: First, the opening of negotiation; secondly, the concluding a treaty of peace; and, thirdly, the observing of the conditions of peace. We should be clearly convinced that negotiation will lead to peace. I am undoubtedly convinced, that it may be the interest of General Bonaparte to consolidate his power; but it cannot be forgotten, that whenever any acts of atrocity were to be accomplished by the French, they have been usually effected by a suspension of arms. The proposed negotiation would relieve France from the present pressure of numerous and alarming difficulties, and could not relieve England from any. The ports of France, which are now blockaded by our fleets and cruizers, would be thrown open for the purpose of introducing naval stores, and a variety of useful and necessary articles, of which the country is in want: fleets too would be sent to bring back the troops which are now deprived of all intercourse with the Republic, and which might then be employed in augmenting the numbers of the French armies. To us a suspension of arms could not be productive of any benefit whatever. Are our ports blocked up? Is our commerce interrupted? And it will also be considered, that there would, in that case, be no more security for the maintainance of such a suspension than other powers

have formerly experienced in similar instances. There is not a merchant in the country that would send a ship to sea without convoy, on such an account. So far I have no objection to agree, that it would be the interest of Bonaparte to enter into a negotiation; for he would derive from it considerable advantages to the commerce, trade, and manufactures of the Republic, whilst this country would be left merely in its present situation with respect to any benefit. He would also enjoy the satisfaction and triumph of lowering the tone and the character of a people who have hitherto proved the great and effectual barrier against the encroachments of Republican policy, and infuse into our allies, and the other powers, a distrust of our resolution and integrity. He would, I entertain no doubt, be inclined to open such a negotiation as that which he directed General Kleber to open with the Ottoman Porte; but the conclusion of peace would be suitable to the views by which the overtures have been dictated. An important consideration occurs to me, and it will, I am confident, have the weight to which it is entitled in your Lordships' minds. Is Bonaparte now prepared to sign a general peace? Is his power sufficiently established, and the stability of his Government so fixed, as to enable him to carry through a treaty of that nature? If he be not prepared, it follows that he cannot be sincere in his offers. On what ground does his power rest in France? He indeed announces "that he is called by the wishes of the French people to fill the first magistracy of the Republic;" and this information he thinks proper to communicate, before it was thought possible to learn whether the French people were so servile, so degraded, as to accept as a gift the Constitution which he was forcing on them at the point of the bayonet. He has, it is true, succeeded in establishing a military despotism, and every act of his Government is supported by an armed force. For can there exist a difference of opinion with respect to the character of his power, when we learn that an army of sixty thousand men is necessary to preserve tranquillity in the interior of France? You cannot, my Lords, forget, that in turbulent Republics it has ever been an axiom to preserve tranquillity by constant action; and that axiom has uniformly been the standard by which the system of the political Rulers of France has been regulated. Such is the impulse that actuates the present Government of France; such was the grand and leading motive by which Brissot was influenced, and such was the cause of the military operations pursued in the time of Robespierre. That the same system prevails at this moment in France, there cannot exist a doubt; for if Jacobin principles are adopted at home—if Jacobin doctrines are still maintained at home—the principle of engaging the nation in a state of

continual warfare must also be strictly adhered to. I have now, my Lords, but little more to trouble you with. If Bonaparte had really shewn a particular desire for a general peace, the offer would be less an object of suspicion. He says, that he has given many proofs of his eagerness to put an end to the war, and of his disposition to maintain the rigid observance of all treaties concluded; and he also observes, that this is the second proof of his desire to effectuate a general pacification. For my part, I am at a loss to find any proof of his having entertained such a desire. Does he allude to the treaty of Campo-Formio? If he does, we certainly are not in possession of a single fact to corroborate his assertion. We, on the contrary, learn, that his sentiments were then in direct opposition to a general peace, and were particularly hostile to this country. When official intelligence of that transaction was sent by him to the Directory, *Monge*, speaking in his name, and delivering his act, his acknowledged instrument and his confidential agent, declared, that the French Republic and England could not exist together. So that if he even were allowed to have an evident interest in promoting peace, would you not be perfectly justified in pausing and reflecting on what degree of faith should be given to the interest and power of such an individual? You were lately told by the present Government of France, that there existed no security, no guarantee, for the preservation of peace in the Republic, from 1793 to November 1799; a just remark, and one which utterly confounds all the assertions, all the arguments, all the observations made here, that no change of men in power could affect the execution and permanence of a treaty. Yet such was the language used in support of the negotiation which was carried on at Lisle. Your Lordships must perceive how much you hazard, by hazarding all on the faith, on the power, and on the life of Bonaparte. If the last security fail you, what remains behind? Will you place your reliance upon the unanimity of the French people in accepting the new Constitution? Will you rest your dependence on the hopes of its permanence? But you are also destitute of every hope from the change which has recently taken place in the persons employed in the different departments of the public service. Men of the blackest characters have been appointed to situations of the greatest trust; persons infamous by the profession of the most licentious principles of anarchy have been raised to places of confidence and power; and those who were judges in the sanguinary tribunals of Robespierre are now exalted to a distinguished rank in the Republic. I am only desirous to call your attention to two principles: whether you are of opinion, that while the system of Government in France (which you have repro-

bated) still prevailed, there were any hopes but in prosecution of hostilities? and whether any event has happened since November, to induce your Lordships to alter that opinion? I have now merely to notice what has been advanced here, and repeated, that we are determined to restore Monarchy in France, and to engage in eternal war sooner than relinquish that object. I have stated this assertion, which has been often made, though it has been as often publicly and solemnly disclaimed. It has been disclaimed after the capture of Toulon, in a variety of instances, down to the present moment, and the slightest alteration has not taken place in the language of Government. I do not pretend to deny, that we considered the re-establishment of Monarchy as the best, the surest, and the speediest means of restoring peace; but it has never been maintained, that it was the only means of effecting that desirable end. We merely wished for a Government that was capable of preserving the customary relations of peace and amity; nor would His Majesty hesitate to treat with a Republic, a Monarchy, or any non-descript form of Government; and consequently the restoration of Monarchy was never made the *sine qua non* of negotiation. If I am asked, what circumstances I may be induced to think proper security for the observance of articles of treaty to be obtained in France, I can only answer, that my judgment is to be regulated by future events. It would be dishonest to commence any negotiation that was not in every consistent respect likely to terminate in peace. It would be unwise, it would be fruitless. If, in 1795, when France, with her numerous and triumphant armies, threatened all Europe; when she found considerable resources in the spoils and plunder of Italy and Holland, and menaced this country with a formidable invasion; if, when she declared that nothing would content her unbounded ambition and inveterate animosity but our complete ruin; if, in such a situation, pregnant with imminent danger, the spirit and firmness of this House led them to meet the approaching peril with undaunted fortitude, and enabled us, under the protection of Divine Providence, to transmit to our descendants the blessings of national independence, of religion, morality, and social happiness; has any event occurred since, to make us doubt the justice of our cause, and the issue of the contest? If the same spirit continues which then actuated our decisions, I ask, are our means less than they were? Let us direct our views to our own strength and resources, and to the triumphant successes of our allies. Our object is declared, and will be effected; we earnestly desire a safe and honourable peace. If, then, our means are not inferior to what they have been; if the situation of our allies is improved; if that of the enemy is impaired

and considerably weakened, we have greater grounds of confidence, and we approach nearer to the attainment of our wishes. I have now, my Lords, stated every observation which occurred to me as connected with the important subject to which your attention is directed; and if you abandon the manly and energetic conduct which has hitherto distinguished your proceedings, you descend from a station which you have filled with so much honour to yourselves and advantage to your country. Upon these grounds I move the following humble Address: "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, thanking him for his gracious Message, and expressing the concurrence of this House in the sentiments which it contains."

[The ADDRESS, as usual, was little more than an echo of the MESSAGE.]

The Duke of BEDFORD rose to give his decided negative to the address. Had he (he said) only to follow the arguments of the noble Secretary of State, he should take up but a very little portion of the time of their Lordships; but he conceived he had a higher task imposed upon him, which was that of discussing the principles of the war, and the basis upon which negotiation was to be founded. Unless he considered the subject in these points of view, the mere arguments advanced by the noble Secretary were easy to be replied to. He felt that he was one of those individuals whose opinions the noble Secretary had despaired of altering. To defend those opinions upon the present occasion, would be taking up their Lordships' time in a manner inconsistent with the respect he owed them. What he meant to endeavour, was to impress the House with the real situation of the country, and with the certainty of the continuance of the ruinous contest in which it was engaged, if their Lordships persisted in reposing confidence in His Majesty's present Ministers. The noble Secretary had, in the course of his speech this night, attempted to defend the conduct of His Majesty's Ministers in refusing to accede to overtures of peace, from the impossibility of any Government that France had had since the Revolution affording a sufficient guarantee for the success of any negotiations that might be entered into. All the objections now advanced to preclude negotiation, might have been urged when the negotiations were opened at Lisle. The conduct of the French Government prior to that period, had been amply sufficient for the manifestation of the principles by which they were actuated; and though His Majesty's Ministers knew their principles then, and at the present moment, to be precisely the same, and, knowing what those principles were, had sent an Ambassador to treat for peace, yet they now told the House

that the principles of the French Government were such, that this country ought not to treat with them. The noble Secretary had alluded to a particular paper, in which it was said the French still defended their conduct in commencing and carrying on the war. For himself, he was far from wishing to defend their conduct; he would as soon take upon him to defend the conduct of some of those powers who were now our allies, or the conduct of this country when it first established itself in India: the details in either instance would be equally disgusting to the feelings of humanity. The second answer of the French Government had been urged as an avowal of principles which formed the basis of the Revolution. Was the paper transmitted by the Ministers of this country of so conciliatory a nature as not to call upon the French Government to defend the conduct of the nation at large in pursuing the war? Had their Lordships read that paper? Did it not tell France, that if it would again revolutionize itself, again change its form of Government, and restore its antient line of Princes, this country would treat with her? Was this the conciliatory paper which it was a crime in the French to answer as they had done? The noble Secretary seemed to think it extraordinary that the French should say they were not the aggressors; and he had endeavoured to shew, not only that they were so, but that they had acted infamously and atrociously. Was this language that ought to have been used? Had the French made use of any language of so provoking a nature? The style of their Government had been the direct contrary. Yet, without the least necessity, the noble Secretary had thought proper to load them with every degrading and insulting epithet. Did the noble Secretary recollect what had been his own conduct when he perceived a disposition on the part of the French agent Lacroix to insult this nation? Unmindful of his own feelings upon that occasion, he had now, upon the very first outset of an attempt at negotiation, thought proper to insult them. That they should be anxious to defend themselves, was not to be wondered at. It was not a question for this House or for this country at present to decide, who were the aggressors, England or France? that was a question to be referred to posterity; it was consequently perfectly natural for either country to wish to throw the burden of the imputation off its own shoulders, and avoid, not only the execration of the present age, but the curse of posterity, and the stigma of being doomed to everlasting infamy. The noble Secretary had anticipated and replied to the charge, that the war was to be continued with France till the restoration of Monarchy. Notwithstanding the answer that had been given to such a charge, he maintained that it existed in full force; for the noble

Secretary had stated, that every change the Government of France had undergone had violated what had gone before; consequently the inference meant to be drawn was, that Royalty was the only one which could be relied upon, as affording any certain prospect of stability. Thus it was clear, that the wild scheme of restoring the French Monarchy was the *sine qua non*, if not of peace, at least of negotiation. What hopes there were of such an event ever taking place by the exertions of this country, he would leave to their Lordships to determine; but of this fact he was certain, that in proportion as this country oppressed France, in the same proportion did its Government become violent; our attempts to destroy Jacobinism had promoted it; and if we persevered, it was likely to be still farther established. When a country was kept in a state of warfare, it was always able to adopt and carry on more violent measures than in times of peace. There was no necessity for recurring to France for an example of this truth; look to the history of this country, and to our own statute books, where proofs enough were to be found. If the restoration of Monarchy were not the object, what was it? Were Ministers contending for a more favourable opportunity of entering upon negotiation? How, if that was the case, was a more favourable opportunity to be attained? Was it by railing at Bonaparte? He could not in terms sufficiently strong censure that littleness of mind which prompted His Majesty's Ministers to attack the character of Bonaparte, with a view to ruin him in the estimation of the French nation; as if, by so doing, they would be able to negotiate with more effect, or gain a fairer prospect of peace. There was something contemptible in the manner of publishing what was called the intercepted correspondence of the enemy; the Ministers that were reduced to such paltry shifts reflected more disgrace upon themselves than upon the writers of the letters. If His Majesty's Ministers were really contending for a more favourable opportunity of negotiating, and making peace, it became the House to consider what prospect the country had of such a change of circumstances. Did we depend upon our allies? Was there any one of our allies who had not shewn, in the course of the present war, that he would make a separate peace, if he could obtain such a one as was favourable to his views? Had not Austria shewn that she had been actuated by views of aggrandizement? Did Ministers themselves place complete and implicit reliance in its treaties with Russia? Had they no reason to think that Russia would fly off from her engagements, if she could do so with advantage to herself? These were points which he did not desire to have discussed now; but he would advert to the probable hopes enter-

tained of a more favourable opportunity to negotiate, from the internal situation of this country itself. He feared that he was speaking too truly when he asserted, that this country was not at the present moment in a state of the most perfect tranquillity. Had their Lordships considered it with relation to its finances—had they considered that the old system of finance was incapable of being longer applied to the operations of Government—that it had been abandoned, and a new one introduced—that that new system had, after a trial of near two years, been found defective, and that it was necessary that some other, more violent in its nature, should be resorted to, in order to enable Ministers to carry on the war; and the more particularly so as the war was carried on in conjunction with powers who would not bring their men into the field for nothing?

Their Lordships had been taught to believe that this country was able to starve the French: now let them consider our own internal situation, and they would find it alarming in an extreme degree. If they repaired to the fields or the woods, they would every where discover the traces of those miserable wretches, whose poverty left them no other resource but depredation. If they contemplated the villages, they would hear nought but the plaintive and unavailing cries of children calling for that food which their parents had not to give them. If any of their Lordships had been called upon to exercise functions of a magisterial nature, they must have had frequent opportunities of seeing instances of strong and healthy countrymen appealing from parish officers, who had denied them assistance on the ground of their ability to work. True, they had ability to work; but where could they procure it? Left without employment, their ears were assailed by the clamours of their distressed families pining at their miserable homes in wretchedness and poverty. Such, till very lately, had been the general state of the country. Happily within these few weeks it had been considerably changed, by the beneficence of individuals. But the necessity of affording such assistance to the laborious part of the community, was a proof of the weakness of the country. He did not like to see the majority depend upon the charitable assistance of the few.—What other prospects had we of conquest? Not more than six months ago it had been thought necessary to resort to strong measures to recruit our army. The fundamental principles upon which the effective force of the kingdom was constituted had been violated, for the purpose of conducting us to victory. That army, which had left the shores of this country with an assurance of success, and whose march seemed more like a triumph, than an expedition the event of which was doubtful—that same army we had beheld obliged to purchase

its retreat from the enemy's territory with disgrace.—Such were the means we had of obtaining a more favourable opportunity to negotiate. Would their Lordships suffer Ministers still to persist? Did they mean to allow them to give the country another Secret Expedition, to drain it of its provisions, in order to fill the magazines of the enemy, and again to disgrace the British character? Surely before they were suffered to proceed, there ought to be some rational hope of success. The question was, Whether the present was a favourable opportunity for peace? He maintained it was; certainly it was as favourable as when negotiations were opened at Lisle. At that time it was the voice of the People that made Ministers endeavour to obtain peace;—let the voice of the People call for it now, and they would have it. It was made an argument, that the present Government of France had not been tried a sufficient time, and that the disposition of Bonaparte was averse to peace. It was a discovery made by His Majesty's Ministers, that the views and interests of Bonaparte were hostile to negotiations of a pacific tendency. To disprove this, the noble Duke referred to the letter of Bonaparte, and his Minister Talleyrand, and contended, that, from their contents, it was evident that peace was not only the object of Bonaparte's personal wish and desire, but that he had stated his personal disposition merely as an additional argument to the general wish of the nation. The letters, in his mind, proved a coincidence of disposition between the nation and the individual who governed it. Peace was the manifest wish of all France; there was not a general who addressed his army, but stated that the grand object for which they fought was peace. Even when a person in the tribunate had expressed an opinion which seemed to favour a continuance of the war, he was obliged to explain it away, so adverse was it to the general feeling and disposition of the people. His Grace admitted, that there might be occasions when it might be necessary to decline negotiation; but no such occasion presented itself at the present moment. He referred to former declarations of the noble Secretary, wherein he had stated, that His Majesty would never suffer the enemies of the country to possess that advantage which they necessarily must derive from his refusal to discuss their overtures for peace. In fact, every thing the noble Secretary had advanced as reasons for entering into the former negotiation, was at variance with what he had said to-night. It had, in the note to Barthelemy, been asserted, that England would always be willing to treat when its enemies should shew a disposition to that effect—if this assertion was not a mockery, why did it not treat now? France had shewn a pacific disposition, and the only way to ascertain whether she was sincere,

and whether Bonaparte was willing to do those acts by which he could guarantee the security of this country, was to enter into a negotiation. To determine to persist in the war after the concessions on the part of the French Government, was neither open, manly, nor characteristic of the British nation. He next referred to the report of Boulay de la Meurthe, relative to the government and situation of France and its Rulers for the last seven years, and admitted, that what was said by Boulay de la Meurthe was the same as proceeding from Bonaparte: but his report was no more to be used by the people of this country as an argument against the lately abolished Constitution of France, than a report of any violent Jacobin upon the antient Government of Louis XVI. He referred also to the report of Monge upon presenting the treaty of Campo Formio to the Directory; and maintained, that his declaration in that report was far from being complete evidence; that it was the general opinion of the French nation that England and France could not exist together. With regard to the character of Bonaparte, he did not see any use that could be drawn from going into it. He, like all statesmen, no doubt, wished to make a peace advantageous to himself, and the nation over which he presided. Like all other statesmen, his motives in wishing to make a peace were not influenced by humanity; it was to be supposed that he would not make any peace, but such a one as would satisfy the French nation. He believed him sincere, because France wished for peace, and peace alone could consolidate his power. The events of war were uncertain; and whenever a leader failed, and was deserted by fortune, the people deserted him likewise. If Bonaparte should experience reverses, he would, no doubt, be destroyed, and some other idol substituted. It was for their Lordships to consider, whether they would continue the war for the purpose of establishing some other person in the room of Bonaparte. As to the abuse which Ministers had thrown upon the character of that man, he felt no concern upon the subject; for he entertained no doubt that they would retract all they had said, if it should be necessary to do so. They had abused every ruling power in France; but whenever they had been driven by the general voice of the people to negotiate, their former ill language had never been any impediment. Ministers had tried negotiation, and had failed; and because they had failed, it was to be a reason why they should not persevere. Let the people tell them to make peace, and they would make it. Without the voice of the people they never would: for they were sensible, that in the calm moments of peace the people would inquire of themselves for what they had been spending their best blood

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and treasure. They would find, that they had obtained nothing to justify such expenditure and heavy calamities as war had produced. Such would be their reflections; and Ministers, knowing this, wished to procrastinate the war. In short, no negotiation could be entered upon with good grounds of success, as long as the present Ministers held their places by the continuance of the war. Nothing but the courage and magnanimity of the people themselves could relieve the country. He considered the present question as one which was big with the crisis, not only of England, but of existing man, and succeeding generations; nothing but this consideration could have induced him to have imposed on their Lordships the tiresome duty of listening, and himself the irksome task of addressing them; for irksome it was to contend, without the slightest probability of effect, against the views of Ministers, and, he was sorry to add, the feelings of his country; but it was incumbent on him, as he deemed this a new war, undertaken without a probability of success, and without the means of obtaining it, to warn their Lordships of the impending evils that threatened the country; to implore them, by the love they bore their country, to pause ere they consented to plunge it into eternal war, and throw away the scabbard. Eternal war it must be if they fought till they conquered France; there was not the slightest probability of succeeding. If France and England were to be eternal rivals, let that rivalry be manifested by other means; instead of desolating each other's territories, and carrying havock and devastation into every part of the habitable world, adding hourly to the sad number of diseonfolate widows and weeping orphans, let the two countries reciprocally endeavour to ease the people from the burdens of war; let them turn their thoughts to agriculture and commerce; let this country be pre-eminent, or vie with France only in the arts of peace. Let each correct the errors of the other. Such a contest would be worthy of both nations. Should we be victorious, we might then exult without offence to God or man. If by his exertions he could hope to produce that state of peace and happiness which he had described, he would willingly toil night and day; but he beheld no change in the disposition of the House. The people too, he feared, supported that disposition; were it not so, much as their liberties were restrained, they yet might have spoken out; they might have addressed their King: they had not availed themselves of that privilege, consequently he could not but suppose them satisfied. If such was the case, the more responsibility attached upon Ministers. Let them be careful that they did not abuse the people's confidence; for as their confidence was great, so was Ministers' responsibility.

The people were bending under the accumulated weight of taxes, and it was for their rulers to take care they did not sink. A continuance of that oppression which they had endured, would either make them torpid slaves, or prepare them for revolution. If the people were driven to despair by griping tax-gatherers, like France they would look up to themselves, and redress their own grievances. He trusted that the Ministers of this country would beware;—the recent example of France was before their eyes, and ought to be ever deeply engraved on their minds. Such, the noble Duke said, were the reasons that had impelled him to deliver his sentiments. If he failed in stemming the torrent, and checking that system which involved the people's liberties, and threatened to plunge the country in all the horrors of a devastative revolution, he should in future refrain from troubling the House. Trembling for England, he must then, in retirement, endeavour to dispense that happiness to a few, which he should have been happy in procuring for the country at large. He would now only observe, that the House could not regard the address proposed by Ministers as containing the sentiments of their Sovereign, but their own; and as such they should freely and rigorously discuss and examine it. It was his intention to propose another address in its stead, which he should now submit to their Lordships' consideration. The noble Duke then sat down, apparently much exhausted; and Lord Holland rose, and read the proposed counter-address, as follows:

"That an address be presented to His Majesty;

"To return our most humble thanks for his condescension and goodness, in having been graciously pleased to communicate to us the correspondence between the Minister of Foreign Affairs in France and His Majesty's principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and most humbly to represent to His Majesty that, on the 8th of December, 1795, His Majesty was graciously pleased to acquaint this House, that he had been induced, by the order of things in France, to meet any disposition for negotiation on the part of the enemy, with an earnest desire to give it the fullest and speediest effect.

"That, in pursuance of this disposition, His Majesty directed an overture to be made in his name, by his Minister in Switzerland, in the Spring of the year 1796.

"That, on the rejection of that overture, His Majesty gave the most solemn assurance, in a note, dated April 10, 1796, that whenever his enemies should manifest more pacific sentiments, His Majesty would at all times be eager to concur in them, by sending himself, in concert with his allies, to all such measures as should be

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best calculated to re-establish general tranquillity, on conditions just, honourable, and permanent.

“ That His Majesty has since entered into two negotiations for peace with the French Republic at Paris, in the Autumn of the year 1796, and at Lisle in the Summer of the following year 1797.

“ That His Majesty has repeatedly and solemnly declared, that the rupture of both those negotiations was solely to be ascribed to the determination of the French Government to reject all means of peace, and to pursue, at all hazards, their hostile designs against the prosperity and safety of these kingdoms.

“ That, on the failure of the negotiation at Paris, His Majesty, in a manifesto, dated the 27th of December, 1796, was graciously pleased “ to renew, in the face of all Europe, the solemn declaration, that, whenever his enemies should be disposed to enter on the work of general pacification in a spirit of conciliation and equity, nothing should be wanting on his part to contribute to the accomplishment of that great object.”

“ That on the rupture of the subsequent negotiations at Lisle, His Majesty had again declared in a manifesto, dated October 28, 1797, that “ he looked with anxious expectation to the moment when the Government of France should shew a disposition and spirit at all corresponding to his own ;” and that “ he then renewed, before all Europe, the solemn declaration, that he was yet ready to conclude peace on the same moderate and equitable principles and terms which he had before proposed.”

“ That we, His Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, impressed with the justice of these sentiments, and equally anxious for the re-establishment of tranquillity, and for the preservation of the honour and dignity of His Majesty's Crown (of which we are, by the Constitution, the hereditary advisers), cannot conceal our regret at perceiving that His Majesty has been advised to reject the first overtures for a general pacification on the part of the enemy ; and we beg leave most humbly to implore His Majesty to give directions for the immediate renewal (if possible) of a negotiation for peace with the French Republic, most fervently beseeching His Majesty to recur to those principles of moderation and equity so solemnly and so repeatedly avowed, and which, if strictly adhered to, must either ensure the speedy restoration of all the blessings of peace, or render our enemies alone accountable for all the calamities too certainly attendant on a continuance of hostilities.”

The Earl of CARLISLE rose, and objected to one noble Lord reading to the House a part of another Lord's speech, as to a matter new and unprecedented.

The Duke of BEDFORD begged it might be understood, that it was not part of his speech, but an amendment to the motion.

The Earl of CARLISLE said, that even that was new in their proceedings.

The Duke of BEDFORD replied, that being exhausted, he had differed little from what the noble Secretary of State had done before him, by giving his motion to the clerk to read.

The Earl of CARLISLE said, any farther remarks from him would be painful to his feelings; and called upon the Lord Chancellor to adjust a matter in which he wished the dignity of the House should be preserved, and the indelicate task of it taken from him.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acknowledged that it was no part of his Grace's speech; but observed, that it should have been referred to the clerk as usual. His Lordship then put the amendment proposed by his Grace.

Lord BORINGDON said, it was not his intention to enter into all the various topics which had been brought forward by the noble Duke in the course of the speech which he had just delivered. He should abstain from doing so, because a great deal of what he must say on some of those topics had already been anticipated by the Secretary of State: other points had been brought forward by the noble Duke, which had already undergone, in that House, at different times, full and ample discussion: and others which had been brought forward by him, had appeared to him to be, in a great degree, irrelevant to the present question; which was simply, whether or no they would or would not assure His Majesty of their support in the present contest, until such times as it should appear that, in any treaty to be concluded with France, the security of his own dominions and of Europe could in any manner whatever be sufficiently provided for? He could not state the question more shortly than by thus quoting the words used in the official note, of which the address before them expressed their approbation. This, he said, was the sum and substance of the address which had been proposed; and it was from being thoroughly persuaded that no token of such security existed at the present moment, and that the safety of the country would, in a great degree, be risked by present negotiation, that he called upon their Lordships to support the address which was then before them. That the safety of the country would, at least, have

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been risked by present negotiation, was a matter, he said, not incapable of proof. A revolution, perhaps, the most important of any that even France itself had yet witnessed, had lately placed upon the throne of power in that country—he would give him no epithets—certainly a most celebrated and extraordinary man. It was not, however, then his intention to enter into any consideration of his personal character: it was sufficient for his purpose if he stated to them that he was very recently arrived at the post he occupied; that it was utterly impossible to guess how long he might remain there; and consequently equally impossible to feel any security with respect to his power of observing any treaty that might be concluded with him. Did he wish to state in still stronger terms the degree of risk to which he thought present negotiation would have subjected the country, he might observe, that in case of Bonaparte's being driven from his present situation (no impossible event, he believed, in the apprehension of any one), how probable it was that he might be replaced by that faction, whose exterminating and undisguised hatred towards this country—whose old cry of war, eternal war with England, would, no doubt, lead them to put an immediate end to any treaty which might be depending between the two countries. In this case, he had no hesitation in saying, that we should be entirely at the mercy of France; and not only that, but we should have the shame and mortification of knowing that we were so entirely from our own haste, and our own imprudence; and that it was our own misconduct alone which had driven us from that proud pre-eminence on which we at present stood, to the most disgraceful situation in which any country could stand; namely, that of an imploring and depending power at the foot of a Jacobin Directory, or whatever else might be the name of the dignity with which Bonaparte's successors might chuse to invest themselves. He did not traduce the country, when he said, that we should then stand at the mercy of France. He would not pretend to determine what might be the real dispositions of the first Consul relative to general pacification. It was, however, not a little remarkable, that though, in the first note transmitted by the Secretary of State to France, His Majesty, with that loyalty and good faith so well becoming his own character, as well as that of the nation of which he was the chief, expressly stated his intentions of acting only in concert with his allies,—it was not a little remarkable in the second French note, not one word should be said respecting peace with the allies. We were expressly invited to send Plenipotentiaries to Dunkirk, for the purpose of concluding peace between England and France; and no reference whatever was made to any of those allies, in concert with

whom alone His Majesty had so properly declared his intention of acting. He argued, therefore, that even if we had acceded to the French propositions, it was highly probable we might have left in existence the Continental war :—we might have enabled France, in a certain degree, to have strengthened and recruited her forces :—we might have allowed her to bring her whole strength against the powers now in alliance with us :—we might have left alive the military habits, spirit, and occupations of that military nation :—and we might have put into the hands of these successors of Bonaparte—(for he would not suppose Bonaparte himself to be a faithless observer of treaties) : we might have prepared for Bonaparte's successors a power more formidable than that now enjoyed by Bonaparte himself : more formidable than its intrinsic strength ; more formidable from the views and principles of those who might be invested with the direction of it ; but above all, more formidable from the depressed and abject state in which most assuredly it would, under such circumstances, find this country. He did not vilify the country when he stated, that such, in all human probability, would be the situation in which England would then be ; for it was utterly impossible to conceive means more calculated to damp the ardour, and check the enterprize of our fleets ; to destroy the discipline and spirit of our armies ; to enfeeble every branch of the public service, and to transfuse into the public mind at large sentiments of distrust and despondency, than would be the hasty conclusion of an insecure and temporary peace, and the infraction of it on the part of the enemy under the circumstances which he had been describing ; or under the only other circumstances by which such infraction could be attempted—he meant, by the rapid succession of innumerable little insults and provocations, each of them, perhaps, taken separately, of no great magnitude, but when pressed one upon the other, as if to see to what point our humiliation would be carried, absolutely insupportable : a mode of proceeding which their Lordships would well recollect, had been repeatedly adopted by the different Jacobin Governments in France, with respect to foreign countries. On these accounts, he said, that as there was at this time no mark of stability in the present Government of France, and consequently no possible security for the observance of any treaty that might be concluded with it, he could not but think that it would be the height of misconduct to risk by present negotiation all the numerous advantages which the firmness and perseverance of Parliament, the high spirit of the People, and the energy of Government, had so successfully combined to procure us.

He totally differed from the noble Duke in his opinion, that the

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personal character of Bonaparte did not enter into the present question. So far from it, the risk which was, in his mind, attached to present negotiation was greatly augmented by it. It was impossible for their Lordships, who had been such anxious witnesses of the extraordinary events which the last ten years had produced in Europe, at once to dismiss from their recollection what was the character, and what had been the part acted in those events by him, in whose person was now concentrated the whole Government of France. It would be difficult for their Lordships to believe that power was, in this instance, likely to produce effects so opposite from those which were usually attributed to it: that it was here so particularly likely to soften the heart of one who, beyond any other man, appeared indifferent to the lives of others; that it should here eradicate every inclination to deceit, and substitute sincerity; that it should restrain ambition, and engender moderation. He was far from denying that such an alteration might take place; but, at least, he thought he was justified in entreating them in a measure of such anxious moment, not to presume upon it before-hand; and, at least, to have the common prudence of waiting for the test of experience, and the evidence of facts. It had been said by the noble Duke, that Ministers, by their answers to France, had declared eternal war. He did not see how this proposition could be proved. It appeared to him, that, short of present negotiation, they could not have more strongly expressed His Majesty's anxious desire for the restoration of peace. The test of experience, and the evidence of facts, could, in fair interpretation, mean nothing else, than that His Majesty feels it to be his duty to wait to see whether the power of the present Ruler in France should be established, and whether, contrary to present expectation, his use of it shall be such as can induce His Majesty to hope for the faithful observance of any treaty that might be concluded with him. He had scarce been installed a month at the time he was speaking. So that His Majesty's Ministers could scarcely have any data upon which to proceed. And such was the nature of the French Revolution, that no reference to the history of former times—no recurrence even to those extraordinary transactions, of which France for so many years had been the melancholy and sanguinary theatre, could in any way lead to the formation of a plausible conjecture, much less to the formation of such a reasonable and solid opinion as must necessarily be adopted before they could honestly proceed in a measure of such deep and momentous importance. Surely in waiting for the test of experience and the evidence of facts, there was nothing that bore the appearance of unwise or useless delay, or justified the imputation of a

weak and timid policy. In October 1795, upon the establishment of the Constitution, with the Directory and two Councils, His Majesty, upon meeting their Lordships in Parliament, intimated his wish of being able to take advantage of that crisis (should it end as he was led to hope), for the purpose of proposing peace. But although the noble Duke had stated it to be in December*, it was not till the March following that His Majesty thought that Constitution sufficiently settled as to justify him in making proposals of peace; which it appeared he did in that month through the medium of his Minister in Switzerland. If Ministers had been more precipitate in acknowledging the present than they were the last Constitution, the noble Duke might have accused them of having done so from a love of tyranny, and from an anxiety to confirm and consolidate a Constitution the most abhorrent, from every principle of liberty, that ever was imposed, by the arm of power, on a subdued and injured people. If Government was justified in pausing a short time after the establishment of the last Constitution, at least there was nothing in the nature of the present which could prejudice them more in its favour. He made no comment upon peace having been proposed to them on this last occasion, because, betwixt powerful and independent nations, that circumstance makes no difference; nor can the proposing peace ever be considered in itself either as an act of humiliation, or a pledge of sincerity. The noble Duke had said, that notwithstanding the clear and solemn manner in which the Secretary of State had disclaimed any such idea, yet nevertheless the restoration of Monarchy was become the *sine qua non* of peace, or, at least, of negotiation. Those accusations against Ministers had repeatedly been made in that House at different periods of the war; with what degree of correctness the negotiations at Paris and Lisle would determine. He had ever considered the restoration of Monarchy in France as a means to peace, and in no way as a just and legitimate end for the continuance of the war. For his own part, he thought it highly desirable for the tranquillity of Europe; though he had no scruple in saying, that it was an event of which he did not entertain the same expectations with, perhaps, many of their Lordships. At the same time, however, he did not think that the noble Duke could be borne out in his use of the epithets, wild and frantic, which he had applied to such an expectation; since the latest accounts from France had brought the intelligence, that

* The Duke of Bedford was correct in his assertion; as a message respecting peace was sent by His Majesty to Parliament on the eighth of December, which probably Lord Boringdon had forgotten.

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Royalist Chiefs were in Paris treating upon an apparently equal footing with the Government, and obtaining, by formal treaty, that large and populous districts should be exempted from contributing either in men or money to the wants of the Republic; an event which, he believed, had never happened during any period of the war. The noble Duke had said, that the first note transmitted by the Secretary of State to France was not one which was likely to induce Bonaparte to acknowledge the original aggression of France, or to disclaim those principles which had contributed so much to the commencement and continuance of the war. (This he denied; and in support of his assertion, read a paragraph from Lord Grenville's note. In that paragraph it was stated, that no advantage could arise from negotiation until it should distinctly appear that the causes and principles which originally produced the war had ceased to operate. If Bonaparte was really sincere in his professions of peace, this would naturally have induced him, if not to make any new professions of principles, at least to confirm those which he had already made on the eve of his revolution, by his organ Boulay de la Meurthe. So far, however, from that having been the case, M. Talleyrand, in his second note, is made, in a great degree, to justify all the excesses of the former Governments, and to plead the cause of those whose aggressions had originally provoked the war. Had Bonaparte been really desirous of peace, is it not probable that he would have taken advantage of the invitation which he had just read, to announce his dereliction of those principles and objects which had hitherto guided the different Governments in France, and to confirm those professions which he had made through Boulay de la Meurthe? This organ, Boulay de la Meurthe, is, however, ordered to renounce them when no negotiation is depending; but his organ, Talleyrand, when negotiation is depending—when he is invited to renounce them—and when the renunciation of them might remove an obstacle to peace,—his organ, Talleyrand, is then ordered to adopt and justify them. He would ask, did that look like a sincere desire of concluding peace?)

The noble Duke had charged His Majesty's Ministers with a change of principles, and a breach of promise in not adhering to the declaration made after the breaking off the negotiations at Lisle. He would ask, however, did the noble Duke conceive that that declaration was to remain in force to the end of time? The very terms in which it was couched proved that no such intention could ever have been entertained. Nor could it reasonably be supposed, that the same conduct could be adopted in situations so extremely different. Since then, Italy had been rescued from the tyranny of

its invaders; the flower of the French army had been destroyed in Africa; the glorious and immortal battle of the Nile had been obtained. Could it be expected then that we should now accede to the same terms to which we then offered to agree, or that a declaration should be binding two or three years after it has been issued?

The noble Duke had been led to hope that any negotiations for a peace would now be crowned with success, because, he said, the rulers and the people of France both equally wished it. He most sincerely believed that the people of France had been long tired of the war, and most anxiously wished for the restoration of tranquillity and peace. But he would ask, since the death of Robespierre, whether every French Government had not made the same pacific professions? Each faction, as it came into power, had held out the same allurements; but each had been actuated by the same insatiable ambition. Each faction had made pretensions to equity and honour, and each had proved unjust and perfidious.—Upon the whole, it was upon the grounds of his thinking that there was no present mark of stability in the Government of France; that the nature and character of that Government justified our expectation of something beyond mere profession; that these circumstances called upon them to assure His Majesty of their support, until such time as it should appear that, in any treaty to be concluded with France, the security of his own dominions, and of Europe, could in any manner whatever be sufficiently provided for: it was upon the ground of his feeling confident that His Majesty's anxiety for the ease and welfare of his people, would lead him to look with impatience to that period, that he called upon their Lordships to support the address as it had been originally moved.

Lord ROMNEY said, that he rose under great difficulties. He wished earnestly to give Ministers his warmest support. He approved of the general tenor of their conduct, and considered himself and the country under the greatest obligations to them. But he thought that in this instance they had taken the wrong ground, and had acted improperly in rejecting with such abruptness the overtures of the French. Neither could he agree in all the conclusions of the noble Duke who had moved the amendment. The conduct and intentions of France did not appear to him so laudable, nor those of the British Ministry by any means so reprehensible, as he had represented them. He had little faith to put in Bonaparte's professions. The chief Consul might mean by these merely to perplex our Government, and to render himself popular at home. But in this case we had laboured that he might gain his end. We certainly should have entered into a negotiation, and seen what terms

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he would have offered us. We should have said, "We formerly made propositions of peace to you, let us now hear the nature of yours." From this no bad consequence could have followed. All military operations are at present suspended at any rate, and the preparations might have gone on with equal vigour for the next campaign. If the terms offered by Bonaparte should have been unreasonable, they might have been rejected with disdain. The odium of continuing the war would thus have been thrown upon Bonaparte, and every Englishman would have contributed with cheerfulness to carry it on. His Lordship concluded by paying a high compliment to His Majesty, whose eminent virtues, he said, distinguished moderation, and fatherly care of his people, made the weaknesses and vices of the Rulers of other nations appear more glaring by contrast. He begged pardon for having so long troubled the House; but these being his sentiments he could not vote for the address; nor should he vote for the amendment.

The Earl of CARLISLE said, that this was not a war to preserve a trifling colony, or to gain an extension of dominion; but to preserve our laws, our liberty, our religion, our property—every thing we hold dear. "We fight for security, and we should accept of no offers of peace until it is established on a permanent basis. By carrying on the war, we have obtained every object we proposed to ourselves in beginning it. We have destroyed that monster which preyed upon the vitals of the Constitution, and threatened its existence. We have checked the career of the conquests of France, which, there was reason to dread, would spread misery and desolation over every country in Europe. We have obtained security, and security we shall continue to enjoy by persevering in the contest, and in this way alone." His Lordship was confident that to enter into a negotiation at present would be to ruin the country, and would therefore vote heartily for the address. He thought, however, that it would have been more prudent had they only thanked His Majesty for his gracious communication, and not given any opinion upon the conduct of the Executive Government. The address pledged them to continue the war till the responsible Ministers of the Crown should say that the period was come when peace would be secure. This was a subject unfit for their discussion. They only knew a part of the transaction, and Ministers might, not improbably, have reasons unknown to them, to justify the violent answers which had been returned to the overtures of the French Government. He thought very highly of Ministers: they had by their prudence and steadiness saved the country, which would inevitably have been ruined, had the Opposition been allowed to

carry into execution their impolitic projects. He only wished that they would not shift the responsibility which they themselves are so able to bear, upon others who must necessarily be incompetent judges. He would make no specific motion upon this subject, but he could not help taking notice of it.

Lord HOLLAND said, that the noble Secretary of State had begun his speech with stating, that the approbation of the conduct of Ministers, in the correspondence under consideration, was an undeniable consequence of the former votes of the House. By this position he endeavoured to entrap those who had formerly supported their measures into an implicit acquiescence in every part of their conduct. Nothing, however, could be more unfounded than this conclusion. For his own part, he had not the honour of being in the House when the first resolutions respecting the war were adopted; but when, during the preceding part of the present Session, he had made a motion for peace, that motion was resisted on grounds totally different from those which the noble Secretary had taken up for his defence, in refusing the overture of the French Government; and every noble Lord who had spoken, whatever his sentiments were, admitted, that circumstances were materially changed. Formerly it was the constant answer to every motion that pointed to peace, that the ambition of France was insatiable; that she refused to listen to any terms of accommodation. But after the House had so decidedly expressed their approbation of the declaration of Ministers, after the rupture of the negotiations at Paris and Lisle; when the House had expressed its opinion in favour of the profession they contained of a readiness to treat whenever the enemy discovered a similar disposition, surely it was not an undeniable consequence of any former vote that their Lordships should now approve of the conduct of Administration, in refusing to enter upon negotiation. One great point was now ascertained by the correspondence, which, in a most important degree, changed the relative situation of the two powers. We could no longer say, as formerly, that the continuance of the war was to be ascribed to the avowed animosity of the enemy. It was not that they would not make or listen to overtures; but it was even by the avowal of Ministers that we did not like to listen or make overtures that we thought it was insecure to make peace; that is, that it was our animosity that precluded the opening of a negotiation for peace. What then are the arguments by which this step is justified? Let us consider what are the objections now urged to any negotiation with the present Government of France? There was one circumstance of which he could not help taking notice, because it seemed to proceed on an objection which had not been

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openly acknowledged, and he hoped did not exist at all : but it was remarkable, that in the title of the correspondence, there was a studied anxiety to avoid giving Bonaparte the title which belonged to him as chief Consul of the French Republic. He was styled General Bonaparte. This appeared to proceed from a wish not to recognize him in the character which he claimed—and the French Republic is never named, but only the country of France. Certainly, however, a negotiation with a Government did not sanction that Government. It was merely a recognition of power, and nothing more. It expressed no opinion on the means by which power was acquired, the right by which it was holden, or the manner by which it was exercised. It originated in the principle of mutual convenience. But the recency of the late Revolution in France was one of the principal objections insisted upon. On former occasions, Ministers themselves had not considered such a circumstance as affording any objection to negotiate, as of itself it could be none. When the late Constitution of the French Republic was established, Ministers, by a message on the 8th of December, 1795, admitted that a crisis was approaching that might lead to the termination of the contest. On that occasion, six weeks had been sufficient to determine their minds. What greater objection then could apply to the present Government of France, that could render it improper to treat with those whom it has placed in authority? Was there any greater appearance of instability in this Government, than in that which had satisfied Ministers on so short a trial? Now the instability of the new order of things is an insuperable objection; surely after having approved of Ministers for proceeding to negotiation with a new establishment, it was not an undeniable consequence that they should approve the conduct of Ministers in acting in a manner diametrically opposite to that which they submitted to the sanction of Parliament. Another objection was to the principle of the French Republic: that principle then was of two kinds, revolutionary and ambitious; but would any man now contend that more danger was to be apprehended from the present Government of France than any former one? Was not the direct contrary the case? Had not every thing alarming; every thing of destructive tendency and pernicious example in political principle been given up and abandoned under the present system? It was clear then, that the objection did not lie against the revolutionary principle of the new Government. Was its ambition then so dangerous now? That the conduct of France had been detestable on different occasions, he did not dispute; it was not his wish or intention to justify its proceedings; but it was said, the Republic had

broken every treaty it had concluded. The noble Lord, on this point, perhaps, might have left more strength to his argument if he had omitted certain treaties in the enumeration; for instance, it was by no means clear that the French had violated the treaty with Prussia? This was the only case that was at all applicable to this country; and it was not made out that the French had been guilty of any violation of it. At any rate, however, that violation of treaty did not serve the purpose for which it was brought forward. It afforded no proof of insecurity from the instability of the new Government; for most of the treaties alluded to had been violated by the same Government by which they were concluded; by that which had actually lasted longest in France. It was also remarkable, that the circumstance of a treaty being made by another Government had in no instance been alledged as a justification of its infraction. There was no proof that any one of the various Governments of France had imagined, much less avowed, and acted upon the principle of the treaties of one Government not being binding on that which succeeded it. As to the ambition which characterized the present Government, that was a consideration that might have weight in the arrangement of terms; it was not a preliminary objection preclusive of all treaty. But what proof else could be given of an abandonment of dangerous views and exorbitant pretensions, but a negotiation in which either ambition or moderation would be displayed? It was said, likewise, that Bonaparte might be insincere. Cases might be supposed, in which strong grounds to suspect the sincerity of an overture might justify a refusal to negotiate, especially if negotiation might lead to danger. Nothing like this was the case here. There were no good reasons to imagine that the French Government was insincere. On the contrary, every day tended to demonstrate its sincerity; or, at least, if it was insincere, it had hitherto acted the part so well, that if they were really sincere they could only have done precisely what they had done. It had done all that depended on itself to evince that disposition. What else could be expected from Bonaparte? Was it reasonable to suppose that he should admit that the guilt of the original aggression lay with France? This was a point which ought not to have come into discussion. He was happy here to find that against the noble Secretary's present arguments, he could produce his own authority: in an official correspondence during a former negotiation, the noble Lord, in a note to the French Government, expressly stated that there was no reason to go into the question who was right or wrong, in a preceding negotiation; the object was to negotiate upon the actual circumstances of relative situation, and upon the real grounds in dispute. It was not Talleyrand who be-

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gan this contest about the original aggression; he did not, like our Ministers, talk in a haughty tone, and throw out severe reproach and pointed insult: Talleyrand merely states, that the original aggression was not the question; and it was the possibility of arrangement that alone ought to be considered. The noble Secretary had, indeed, began by declaring, that to those who disbelieved in the French being the aggressors, he did not address himself; for those he despaired of convincing; and yet he employed two-thirds of his speech to prove the French were the aggressors—unsuccessfully, he believed, as he had foreseen, to those who were not of that opinion before, and superfluously, he was sure, to those who were of that opinion. After dwelling upon the objections to peace, the noble Secretary did not say how it was to be obtained. The note in answer to Bonaparte's communication hinted at a mode, indeed; but what was that? Suppose that Bonaparte, desirous to obtain peace by every means, should sit down to consider how he could succeed in the object of his wishes; what does the note, then, allow him to do? He would find, indeed, that the restoration of the hereditary line of Kings is the only case in which a speedy peace is admitted to be possible: his own Government must be proved by experience, and the evidence of facts, before it is admitted to negotiate. But what is this experience and evidence of facts? Formerly six weeks were judged sufficient; now the probation required is neither ascertained by its duration, or by the mode in which it is to be conducted. In fact, therefore, the restoration of the hereditary line of Kings was the *sine qua non* in which immediate negotiation was admitted by Ministers. Now let us examine this condition of peace in two points of view: Was it desirable in itself? and did it really remove the objections urged to negotiation? Surely if the ambition of the French Republic was so formidable, we could not forget this ground of apprehension, and this source of danger, when we talked of restoring the House of Bourbon. Had we forgot the recorded charges of the Parliament of this country against the ambition of the French Monarchs at various periods? Had we forgotten their almost proverbial ambition? And was their restoration the remedy for evils arising from such a source? Every Frenchman, however, suspected that the restoration of the ancient family would be so clogged as to render France insignificant. Frenchmen, therefore, could not be supposed to enter into our views in that respect. As to that event, if it were likely to take place, he, perhaps, differed from many noble Lords. It did not seem so desirable as some imagined. He did not look upon it as affording the prospect either of much security to this country, nor of much tranquillity and hap-

pinets to France. It was said in the note in reply to the first communication from the French Government, that the most natural pledge they could give of sounder principles, was the restoration of that family which had maintained France in "prosperity at home, and in respect and consideration abroad." It was, indeed, rather a singular circumstance, to observe so much anxiety in Ministers for the prosperity of France. But what respect and consideration was here alluded to? Was it the respect of justice, of moderation, of wisdom, fidelity, and uprightness? No; it was the respect arising from the power of France, and was founded on no better claims. — To promote the internal prosperity, and the external respect and renown of the French Monarchs, surely would not be considered as British objects; and to pursue them, would be to do that which Ministers had so often imputed to the Jacobins—feel an interest for France without any regard to the security of our own country, and its superior title to our support. We complained in the note of the recency of the Revolution as precluding immediate negotiation; and we recommended to France, in the same breath, to make another, as the speediest means of restoring peace. We talked of the ambition and insincerity of the Republic as objections; and then mentioned as a remedy a government and family proverbially insincere and ambitious. We apprehended instability, and then expressed a hope that, for the sake of peace, they would adopt a form of government which, in the present circumstances, must be unstable and precarious. France, however, by the decision of Ministers, was to be put in a state of probation, if she refused the alternative of the restoration of Royalty, till she had renounced all the principles complained of, or till she was ready to acknowledge the guilt of original aggression; that is, till M. Talleyrand was convinced by the noble Lord's eloquent harangues in this House. But how were we to be satisfied that these changes had taken place, unless we agreed to negotiate? The noble Lord had stated with much pomp and solemnity, that the second letter of Talleyrand contained a principle more detestable than any of the very worst periods of the Revolution. On hearing this assertion, he had perused the letter with additional attention; but he could discover in it nothing of this dreadful description. The French Minister did not defend every act of every preceding Government. He stated, that the perseverance of this country had driven France into excesses; but if the avowal of this principle was atrocious, what was the practice of it? And, *unfortunately*, it was too true that the example of this country might give to France an apology for some part of her violence. What had been our conduct to neutral powers? Had we not violated the neutrality of the Grand Duke of

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Tuscany, in spite of the most solemn treaties? Had we not violated the neutrality of Genoa? What was the conduct of our allies? Did not the Russians violate the neutrality of other States? Did it not prescribe to the King of Denmark that no clubs should be permitted in his dominions? He was aware, that to prove that we, or our allies, were guilty of the same crime, did not exculpate the French; but when we saw such unjustifiable proceedings on the side of those who made the crimes of France the cause of the war, it proved that this was nothing but a pretext. Ambition was objected to France; but was France the only ambitious power in Europe? He did not say that we ought never to have an ally that was ambitious; but surely when we heard it asserted that we must continue war because France was ambitious, that we could not make peace with an ambitious power, we are warranted in dwelling on the ambition of our allies, in order to prove that we are not at war merely because the French are ambitious. But it would be remarked by their Lordships with surprise, that the noble Secretary, in justifying the conduct of Ministers in rejecting all negotiation, drew many of his arguments from the second letter of Talleyrand. Whatever principles that letter displayed, whatever expressions it contained, could not be the least palliation of the refusal to negotiate; because the decision of Ministers was pronounced before they could know or suspect that a second messenger would be received. It was objected to, that the French had said nothing of a general peace, to which we alone could agree. The letter of the Chief Consul to His Majesty, however, alluded to the miseries of war every where, and the necessity of putting a stop to the effusion of blood. It evidently pointed to the miseries of war every where, and a desire to co-operate in putting an end to them; at any rate, we might have suggested the propriety of an explicit avowal. The noble Secretary enumerated the evils that would arise from negotiation; but these sentiments were new with him; not a word was said of that matter after the failure of the negotiations at Paris and Lisle. We had negotiated formerly in circumstances that might have given rise to the charge of timidity—at the time of the mutiny; after the breaking of the Bank; such were the circumstances in which negotiation formerly took place. The result surely was not of that dangerous tendency which had been described. Whatever might be his opinion of the views of our Government in the negotiation at Lisle, he was ready to allow that the French had evidently shewn a determination to continue the war; that they had outraged and insulted our country on that occasion; and what was the consequence? The people had felt, and had resented it as such; and never, in the course of the war, had they exerted themselves with

more spirit in its support. If then the French were still actuated by that hostile spirit, from negotiation it would appear; and by the notoriety of their insincerity alone could the continuance of the war be justified, and the opinions of the country reconciled to the prosecution of it. It was said, that interest alone induced France to keep well with Prussia; but might not the same interest prompt France to observe faithfully the engagements of treaties? The interests of the two countries were not so divided as to be irreconcilable. Bonaparte had given every proof of his sincerity, and every thing tended to confirm that testimony. Much was said of the character of Bonaparte; the noble Secretary had, indeed, prefaced his observations by attempting to defend such attacks; but all his argument went to justify an attack on a Government, to which, if those who made it felt that it was founded, he saw no great objection; but nothing the noble Secretary had said justified abuse and Philippic against an individual; and he could not perceive that any advantage could arise to us from blackening the character of an individual. It was not dignified; it was not politic. We had now taken up the principle so much objected to the Jacobins, of distinguishing between a People and their Government. What, on the contrary, was the conduct of the French? In the letter to the King, Bonaparte distinctly renounces this principle, and acknowledges the title and character of His Majesty's Government. On our part, the note of Ministers was a manifesto to the Royalists, and framed for that purpose. It spoke of the miseries of France; but the miseries of France were not the cause of the war. They might interest our humanity, but they were not fit to be noticed in diplomatic papers. As little had we to do with the internal miseries of the Republic, as Talleyrand would have to retaliate, by reproaching us with the Test Acts, the want of Parliamentary Reform, the Income or Assessed Tax Acts, or any other public measure that might be considered as a grievance. There was, indeed, one argument against a negotiation, which he had heard, and which was the only one that had made any impression at all on his mind, the only one that looked to him like common sense, or common humanity. This was the apprehension of sacrificing the Chouans, with whom we might have engagements, and whom he feared we had incited to their present imprudence by our money and intrigues. This argument the noble Secretary had not urged; and he did not blame him for suppressing it, as it was a delicate subject, under all circumstances, for a Minister to talk of; but there could be no impropriety in his saying a few words on the subject. He would then be as averse as any man to sacrifice those who we had incited, or to abandon those we

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had engaged to support; but he would ask, Was it not possible, if a negotiation was sincerely carried on on both sides, if peace, in a spirit of conciliation, was concluded, that we might, in fact, render these Chouans a service greater than our furnishing them with arms, supplies, or even assistance? He would ask, if it was not possible, if it was not probable, he had almost said, if it was not certain, that, by continuing the war, we were dooming them to destruction? It was a dreadful thing to reflect, that by the obstinacy of Ministers, we might be condemned to carry on the war for years, without gaining any advantage which we might not receive from negotiation at the present moment. He differed from his noble relation when he said, that the people of this country acquiesced in the conduct of Ministers. He was convinced that the people at large disapproved of their abrupt refusal to listen to any overtures; and if it should afterwards clearly appear that Bonaparte had been sincere, how would their Lordships reconcile it to their consciences to have given their implicit sanction to measures that prolong the calamities of war for so long a period, without any motive of honour, interest, or security? He therefore gave his decided support to the amendment.

The Earl of CAERNARVON rose, and said, he would detain their Lordships a very short time only, as many of the observations that had occurred to his mind had been anticipated in the course of the debate. He should offer a few remarks, but certainly not an objection to the address moved by the noble Secretary of State, in the support of which he cordially joined; and when he said this, he meant to speak from his judgment, ignorant as he was, of many grounds and reasons that might make the answers of His Majesty's Ministers to be what, uninformed as he then stood, he verily believed them to be, proper and suitable answers to the letters of Bonaparte, the First Consul of the French Republic, and M. Talleyrand, the Minister for Foreign Affairs in France. At the same time (he said) that he, in his present state of ignorance, believed Ministers had given the proper answers; he begged leave not to have it understood that he had pledged himself, at any future time, when he was able to judge from fuller information and better knowledge, not to support a motion for highly criminating those very Ministers for the answer that he now declared to be, in his opinion, the proper answer to have been returned. His Lordship declared, he could not concur with the noble Duke (Bedford) in considering that answer as a refusal to treat for peace, or a declaration of eternal war. It was, as the Secretary of State had aptly termed it in his speech that evening, a call upon the House and the Country, to pause before

they suffered themselves rashly to enter into a negotiation with a Government, of the principles and probable stability of which it was absolutely necessary that they should be enabled to decide, "from experience and the evidence of facts." He should not, at a proper time, be unwilling to enter into a negotiation with the present Government of the French Republic; not, that he did not think as little of the candour and sincerity of Bonaparte, and as much of his treachery, and other objections to his personal moral character, evinced by a variety of undeniable facts, as the noble Secretary of State did. In almost every thing that had been said of that distinguished General, he fully agreed. He did not expect any extraordinary faith to be manifested by Bonaparte, more than by any other Chief or Chiefs of a Government; but although he should be best pleased if a Monarchical Government were restored to France, it ought to be recollected, that in all times, in Monarchies, as well as in Republics, Aristocracies, and every other species of Government, good faith respecting treaties, and a due and religious observance of them, were preserved and exemplified only so long as it was the interest of the parties respectively to maintain them. So little good faith in treaties had the history of them afforded, that at the very time that they were signed, a secret resolution and intention was often made to violate them at a particular period. A remarkable instance of such treachery was one, of which he was himself told by the French Minister to the Court of Spain some years since, viz. that at the peace of 1763, between this country, France, and Spain, when the treaty was ratified at Madrid, and signed, an order had been given the same day to make an attack, at a given and stated time, on Falkland's island, and it took place accordingly. The Court of Spain, when applied to, and remonstrated with by this country, had actually forgot the order, and so had Monsieur de Choiseul. This showed that it was not the permanency of the good faith of this or that Court, or this or that Minister, respecting a treaty of peace, that was to be relied on, in one case more than another. But certainly, under the peculiar circumstances of the late recent Revolution in the Government of France, it would have been injudicious in His Majesty's Ministers not to have paused, in order to have some experience of the designs and principles of the new shaped Government before they entered into a negotiation, which could, for the present, have been attended with no advantage to us, but, on the contrary, must have been at once highly prejudicial to British interests, and obviously beneficial to France. With regard to the present address, he should certainly give it his support, reserving to himself full freedom hereafter, whenever occasion ap-

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peared to him sufficiently to warrant it, to contend against the arguments and grounds of the answer, that he meant that night to vote for, as proper and justifiable. At the same time he could not agree with a noble relation of his (Lord Carlisle) in thinking, that it would have been better if the Address had stopped short, and confined itself merely to returning thanks to His Majesty for his gracious communication of the papers. The rest appeared to him to be not quite necessary; and by it the House took upon themselves a share of the responsibility which ought to rest wholly with the Executive Government. He was as ready as any man to acknowledge the obligations Ministers had conferred on their country, by their wise and extraordinary exertions in the conduct of the war, and the protection of our rights and liberties. He spoke only as far as he knew, or as the grounds of their conduct and proceedings were visible and ascertainable. In respect to matters submitted to that House for their approbation, of which he was not acquainted with the springs, he could only, in that case, decide for himself, and form the best opinion his judgment might direct. He therefore begged leave to repeat his declaration once more, that he should support the Address; but desired to be understood as not pledging himself to vote hereafter for every measure grounded upon it.

The Earl of LIVERPOOL said, he concurred so entirely with the noble Secretary of State in the topics he had urged on the present occasion, that he need not go over them again, but merely express his assent. He should not long detain their Lordships with what he had to submit to their consideration. He desired them to look at the present situation of this country. Our fleet was triumphant in every part of the globe—our revenue flourished beyond any thing that ever appeared before in the history of nations—our taxes, large and numerous as they were, proved to the world how much might be expected from a free people, in defence of the advantages which they enjoyed. All the commerce of the world was now brought into our harbours. Should we depart from a system that had brought us into such a situation, without the least chance of security for its continuance, but, on the contrary, almost the certainty of its destruction by following another course? Should we rely upon the arts and treachery of the enemy; for nothing else was offered to us in the present instance? His Lordship said, he had read the papers referred to in the motion, with all the attention he was master of, and he saw no other course for His Majesty's Ministers, to take but that which they had taken. No notice was taken of our allies by the enemy. We should take care to avoid taking any step which our allies might disapprove. We had always said

that we should never treat but in conjunction with our allies, and no ally of ours was so much as mentioned by the enemy: this was the first objection to opening the negotiation. The second was, that of our consenting to an armistice—to an armistice when all the commerce of France was gone; for they had now no commerce; nor had they had any for the last three or four years. They had nothing but pilfering privateers, who prey (thank God, not very successfully) on the commerce of this country. Now, to agree to an armistice on such terms would be highly disadvantageous to this country; and farther, his Lordship would say, that if Bonaparte was not sincere, a supposition not very extravagant, negotiation would be of benefit to him, but of the highest prejudice to us. His Lordship said, he would not go into the general history of this subject; but he could not help observing, that the personal character of Bonaparte (especially when there was nothing to set against it), was not to be wholly left out of consideration. He could not say, that the circumstances of his having written one good natured letter to our Sovereign, was enough to clear him of all suspicion of having wishes for the destruction of this country. What then was to be done? He would answer in the temperate, and, in his opinion, prudent language of the answer to the note of Bonaparte—"Leave this to the result of experience, and the evidence of facts." Having said this, the noble Earl recurred to the decree of the 19th of November, 1792, which was part of the law of France at this hour. By that decree the people of France are stated to have a right to interfere with every Government upon earth; and what was most remarkable, a motion was made to confine this decree to the countries with which the French are at war; but that was negatived—Why, if sincere in their wishes for peace, did they not repeal this decree? Another point was still of greater importance, which was, that they have a right, by their own decree, to annex any part of Europe which may fall into their own hands, to their Republic, and then to set up that decree as an answer to all negotiation respecting the terms of peace—Why did they not repeal that decree? Until they spoke out upon these subjects, his Lordship saw no good to be derived from opening a negotiation: for we ought never to get out of an advantageous situation, without the prospect of success in the undertaking. His Lordship concluded with observing, that the Address appeared to him to be perfectly proper as it stood, without the amendment.

The Earl of CARLISLE, while he lamented that the discussion had taken place, rose to answer some of the arguments of the noble Earl, which he considered as fallacious. It was stated, that we were in possession of the trade of all the world; but to what were

we indebted for it? No doubt to the war. Peace, therefore, must deprive us of a part, and return it to its former sources. This argument then was not only against entering into a negotiation with France now, but at any future time, and under any circumstances whatever. He put it then to the noble Lord, and he asked whether it was arguing like a Philosopher or a Statesman, to insist that war must be continued in order that all the ships of the world should come into the port of London? Exclusive of the various other calamities attendant upon war, which must counterbalance this advantage, was the change of property, that must necessarily arise from the pressure of taxes, of little moment? This prosperity of trade might be pleasing to trading men; but country gentlemen, and the middle classes of society, had no share in its benefit. There was another argument adduced by the noble Lord, to which also he could not subscribe. He was pleased to ask what proof France had given of her disposition to renounce the system of conduct of which we complained. Surely it was not to be expected that France, in the heat of war, would make the *amende honorable*, and deprive herself of the confidence and assistance of those men who supported her Government, by condemning their conduct. This was a proceeding that must weaken her, and was not to be expected until the arrival of peace. His Lordship then proceeded to observe upon the answer returned to the French proposition for opening a negotiation, and disapproved of it as going too far. He did not condemn Ministers (whom he and the noble Lords connected with him wished to support) for pausing before they should embrace such an overture; what he condemned, was their going so much into detail in their answer. In his mind it would have been sufficient to have stated that the proposal took no notice of our allies; but he repeated his objection to the address, as it went to procure the sanction of Parliament to the conduct of Government. Ministers might have their reasons for thinking there was no stability in the present Government of France to justify entering into negotiation with her; but Parliament were kept in ignorance of these reasons, and very properly so. At the same time, however, it was going too far to call upon them to sanction a proceeding, the whole merits of which they could not be acquainted with. These were his objections to the Address; at the same time, he confessed, if he liked it even less than he did, he should vote for it.

The Earl of LIVERPOOL explained, and expressed himself sorry that the noble Lord should have misconceived his meaning, and given to his expression a sense which his words would not bear. It was in the recollection of their Lordships, whether he did not,

upon the subject of the continuance of hostility, make use of the very language of the answer to the note of Bonaparte, that the matter must be left to experience, and the evidence of facts; but the noble Earl had totally misconceived his meaning upon that part of the subject.

Lord AUCKLAND spoke a few words in favour of the Address.

The House then divided—For the Address, 79; Proxies, 13. Against it, 6; Proxy, 0. Majority, 86.

The six Peers who voted as Not Contents, were, the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Albemarle, Lord Ponsonby (Earl of Besborough), Lord Holland, Lord King, and Lord Camelford; and

The following Protest was entered on the Journals:

“DIE MARTIS, 28 JAN. 1800.

“The original motion being put, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, &c.

“The same was carried in the affirmative.

“DISSENTIENT,

“Because the Address adopted by the House directly approves of the rejection of an overture for peace, when that invaluable blessing might very probably be attained with honour and security, by opening a negotiation with the French Republic, and indirectly approves of the language in which the rejection of the offer was conveyed to the French Government; a language which, in my opinion, can only tend to widen the breach between the two countries, to exasperate the enemy, and prolong the calamities of war.

“HOLLAND.”

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, January 28.

Mr. ABBOT moved, That there be laid before the House an account shewing the amount of the money which would have been applicable to the expenses of the Civil List, if the revenue enjoyed by his present Majesty had been the same that had been enjoyed by his late Majesty, computing from the 5th of January 1777, to the 5th of January 1800; and what his present Majesty has received in lieu of these revenues, and the difference to the Public upon the balance, &c.—Ordered.

Mr. Abbot then said, that in moving, as he was about to do, for accounts of the balances which were in the hands of Public Accountants, it was proper he should say, that at some future period he should propose to the House a measure similar to that which was adopted in the reigns of King William and Queen Anne, for charging Public Accountants with interest for the money of the Public remaining in their hands.

He then made several motions upon the subject of Public Accounts, of which the following are the heads :

That there be laid before the House a list of Public Accountants, whose accounts have been delivered to the Commissioners for auditing Public Accounts from January 1774 to January 1800, specifying the names, services, and progress of the Accounts; and also the total amount of the balance due on the several Accounts, &c. so far as they can be ascertained, &c.

A List of Public Accountants who have delivered in their Accounts to the Comptrollers of Army Accounts in the same manner.

An Account of the Arrears as they stood at different periods from 1774 to 1800, from Officers of the Customs.

The same with regard to the Office of Excise.

The same with regard to the Distributors of Stamps, varying the periods of time.

An Account also of the net Balance in the hands of the Distributors of Stamps, up to the 5th of January 1800.

An Account of the total Amount of Arrears due on the 5th of January 1800, from the Receiver General of the Land Tax, from the year 1774.

The same Account from the Post-Office.

Also from the Persons employed to collect the Revenues of the Crown Lands.

All these Accounts were ordered to be laid before the House.

Lord SHEFFIELD moved, that there be laid before the House an Account of the quantity of Wheat, Wheat Flour, Oats and Oatmeal, Barley and Rye, imported into Great Britain from any parts of the world, distinguishing them, and distinguishing each year, from the year 1794 to the present, as far as the same can be made up. — Ordered.

Wednesday, January 29.

Mr. LONG moved the order of the day for taking His Majesty's message into consideration. Upon the order being read, he said, that he rose with concern to state, that his right honourable

friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not being sufficiently recovered from his indisposition, was unable, as he had hoped, to attend in the House this day. He was therefore under the necessity of postponing the consideration of this question, which he should propose for Monday next, when he had no doubt his right honourable friend would be able to attend. A notice for another motion stood for that day; but he had authority to say, that the honourable gentleman, who had given the notice, had agreed to postpone his motion to Monday se'nnight.

He then moved, that the order should be discharged, and entered for Monday next.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he lamented the alarming illness of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but did not like putting off business of great importance, for the personal convenience of any man. He reminded gentlemen, that when this business was first proposed, he complained of the time, as insufficient for a subject of such magnitude. The bringing forward those delays, from time to time, did away all the advantages that he proposed, as no sufficient notice could be obtained. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told him, that for his individual part he had no objection, but had much on a consideration of the delay, as the eyes of all Europe were fixed upon the event of the discussion, and therefore no time should be lost. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes now farther delays, and he (Mr. Tierney) would have no objection to a week farther, did not a circumstance arise, which rendered that discussion immediately necessary. From the decision of the Lords, Europe may take a tone, and not finding the resolution followed up by the Commons, may despair of their subsidies, and fear a disappointment from the expected contradictory decisions of that House. He for one hoped that they would not agree to such a determination as their Lordships did, on one of the most rash and inconsiderate notes that ever was penned by a Minister. The Lords had come to a decision on a question of supply, a thing unusual in practice, and preceded the Commons by one week, in which they had prejudged what should have originated in another place. He would ask, were they sure the Commons would concur in such a decision? And he hoped that gentlemen would try that question, by naming an earlier day, on their own principles; he would say Friday; or Saturday, should they jump over Friday, as all the Courts in alliance with us were in expectation of this decision. Or once admitting of delay as matter of no inconvenience, would they reasonably indulge him in the addition of two days, and delay it till Wednesday next? An honourable friend of his, a gentleman much interested in the question

of peace, was confined under a fracture of one of his limbs (Mr. Grey); that gentleman, under this delay, would be enabled to attend, and he thought he ought to be accommodated. He was thus disposed to take gentlemen on their own grounds, and agree that the discussion should be—early or late. He recapitulated his observations, and pressed the dilemma arising from an earlier or later period of discussing the subject.

Viscount BELGRAVE said, the question was, whether his right honourable friend should be present at this debate or not; and whether, therefore, we should defer the discussion till his recovery enabled him to attend? The order was fixed for Monday, and through the indisposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer postponed till to-day. The same cause had led naturally to a similar proposition; and on those reasonable grounds Monday was proposed as giving a proper interval for gentlemen to consider and attend. He would be glad, he said, to see an honourable gentleman, the Member for Northumberland, in his place on the day of discussion, that the House may have the benefit of his talents; but it should be remembered, that this question implicated the conduct of his right honourable friend, together with all His Majesty's Ministers. The question surely was most intimately interesting to them, and bore no comparison to the convenience of gentlemen, when brought in competition with the important concerns which this question involved.

Mr. HOBHOUSE insisted on the proposition of his honourable friend as irresistible on reasonable grounds. He hoped the business would come on, in the event, whether the right honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer attended or not. That right honourable gentleman said, all Europe was interested in the discussion; its decision surely then was matter of eager expectation. The right honourable gentleman had been absent from that House for six weeks, and considerable business was transacted in his absence. He hoped then some gentleman of eloquence, who were among his (Mr. Pitt's) friends, would undertake the business in the event of his absence again, should it be deferred beyond Monday.

Mr. LONG said, that though he had no doubt his right honourable friend would be able to attend the House on Monday next, yet, that if his indisposition continued, he trusted the business would be still farther postponed, because he could not think, upon public grounds, that it was one which ought to be discussed unless his right honourable friend were present. The House and the Country were of this opinion. The honourable gentleman who objected to the motion had said, that he could not agree to postpone business of great

importance in that House for the personal convenience of any man. Perhaps it would have done more credit to his feelings, had he spoken in different terms of the circumstance which gave occasion for delay in this business, and particularly as he had afterwards observed, that he now found the illness of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was very alarming. Mr. Long added, that he was happy to say, that from nothing which had fallen from him could such an impression be drawn. He had the satisfaction of stating, that he did not consider the indisposition of his right honourable friend as alarming, but it was such as prevented his attendance on that day. As to the attendance of the honourable gentleman to whom he (Mr. Tierney) had alluded, he did not know what the House might be disposed to do, if such a plea were hereafter alledged as that which he had hinted at; but the House had been always indulgent, even in cases where merely the personal convenience of Members who took an active part in debate had been urged as the ground of postponement. In the present case he was sure the House would not hesitate. He was certain that nothing but the cause he had assigned would have induced his right honourable friend to wish for a momentary delay; for he could assure the honourable gentleman opposite to him, that he was as anxious for the discussion of the question as he, or any of his friends could possibly be.

Mr. TIERNEY repeated his concern for the illness of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and said, he certainly was entitled to indulgence; but when this business is twice put off, he must be forgiven if he suspected it was for the accommodation of those gentlemen who were the right honourable gentleman's friends. He had asked for a small delay to accommodate those who were highly interested in the business, and who wished for the indulgence, and he was refused; and he must say it was hard on those who came far to attend, to be now subject to those repeated delays.

Mr. PERCIVAL thought the objections fully answered. There were few gentlemen, to whose personal convenience he would sooner give way, than to the convenience of the Member for Northumberland; but that inconvenience was not so great as the business was important: and should his right honourable friend not attend on Monday, he hoped the House would feel itself disposed to postpone it. On Europe's expectation being mentioned, he would just observe, that it was of the highest importance that the true reasons should go abroad for the delay, and this had been published by the reasons assigned for it; this gave a sanction to the just grounded expectations of Europe and the World, that we were disposed and willing to entertain this discussion.

Mr. LONG then moved, that the order of the day should be discharged, and fixed for Monday next. — Agreed to.

Adjourned to Monday.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, February 3.

The House confirmed a decree of the Court of Session in Scotland, in the case of Donaldson versus Lord Perth.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, February 3.

ADDRESS TO HIS MAJESTY.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS moved the order of the day, for taking into consideration His Majesty's Message; and the papers relating thereto. The message being read,

Mr. Secretary Dundas rose, and spoke to the following effect:—

"Sir, accustomed as I am to take part in the internal transactions of His Majesty's Government, it will not be thought extraordinary if I should move an Address approving of that correspondence which has been just read, so far as it respects the Administration of this country. Sir, on this subject I shall trouble the House with some observations; but I hope that the obvious nature of the subject will not induce a necessity that I should trouble it long. It is a subject which it is impossible for us to consider properly, without adverting to the circumstances and situation in which we are placed, as decisive of the conduct which we ought to pursue. We are not now at a stage of the business to be at liberty to bring forward opinion, and conclude from theory and speculation. Experience has decided the question; and, thanks to it, we are to dispute on the merits of the French Revolution, whether it be that glorious work, which some have fondly imagined it, or whether it be a transaction that has produced more mischief, horror, and devastation, than the political history of the world affords example of. I do hope, I say, that we are now at that period of time when it becomes necessary to substantiate this assertion by argument; for I see no person rising to justify the principles and practice of the French Revolution, at least, not in this House; if it still has its admirers out of it, no doubt they

must be among those who have taken part with it from the beginning, and rejoiced in all its horrors. Sir, in considering the question before us, I must call the attention of the House to the leading principles of that Revolution, whatever form or shape it may assume. I do not, however, mean to enter into a detail of circumstances on this point. Experience has saved me the trouble; for I state it as an undeniable fact, that the leading feature of the French Revolution, illustrated by the uniform tenor of its conduct to foreign States, is a total disregard for all treaties and obligations, and a sovereign contempt for the rights and privileges of other powers. If it were necessary to adduce a proof, I should refer merely to one transaction. Has there been, I ask, any attempt to palliate the French decree of the 10th of November, a decree constituting it a part of their bounden duty to excite insurrection and sedition in other States, for the purpose of overthrowing their existing Governments? I contend, that this proclamation contains the code of the Revolution, and that its spirit never has been departed from in a single instance; and I also contend from its obvious overture, that there is no person present who could attempt to justify the publication of that decree. I do not, as I have already stated, intend to detail the various enormities and offences that have occurred since the French Revolution; but it is necessary to consider and weigh with due attention how far France has observed its faith with foreign nations, and whether it has constantly manifested a peaceable disposition. Sir, I know perfectly well, and have no hesitation to confess, that the French Revolution professed its object to be purely pacific, and at an early period proclaimed such to be its intention. I admit a proclamation to that effect, shortly after the Revolution; but it is necessary to recollect whether this that was professed was its real genius and character; and a singular thing it is, truly; that in the interval between the date of that proclamation and the present moment, there is scarcely a nation that has not been either at war with France, or on the eve of being so; not from any ambition or want of faith on their part, but in consequence of the open violation of subsisting treaties, and direct aggression by the French Republic. In proof of this assertion, I beg leave merely to recite the names of the different nations with which it has been at war within that time, Spain, Naples, Sardinia, Tuscany, Genoa, Geneva, Modena, Venice, Austria, Russia, England, Egypt (*a laugh*), &c. and even that creature of its creation, the Cisalpine Republic, so that Denmark and Sweden are the only two kingdoms that have not been in actual and avowed hostility with it; and even they have suffered injuries scarcely inferior to what it has inflicted upon the nations with whom it was

engaged in open war. This short statement shall answer justice me; and I shall only observe, that France, which set out with such pacific intentions, has, somehow or other, not been able to escape from being constantly involved in war. Still, is it nothing that this should arise (not from accident, or any fortuitous combination of circumstances, but) from the inherent principles of the Revolution; and that, from a strict adherence to them, negotiation has been ineffectually tried, or, in case of its success, grossly violated by France, with respect to the nations with which she was at war; and that, in the case of the two countries to which I have alluded, they have, in consequence of her hostile conduct and aggression, been under the necessity of recalling their Ambassadors? This, then, being the strong feature of the Revolution, the peculiar character of the Jacobinical Government of France, and it being clear and manifest that a principle hostile to peace, and in opposition to the spirit of peace and treaties, has characterized the French Revolution, the question at this present day resolves itself simply into this, whether that Constitution, such as I have described it, does or does not exist? In arguing this point, I have no occasion to resort to abstract reasoning; I have only to state the authority of the supporters and advocates of the late Revolution, every one of whom is of opinion, that it was impossible, from the nature and constitution of the French Government, that it could present any thing but continual war to all nations within its sphere of action. This is no description of mine; it is the account given of it by those who have lived under it, who have taken an active part in its administration, and judge from a ten years experience of its merits. Having thus ascertained, from the testimony of the French themselves, what the Government of France was, I am led, by the natural progress of disquisition, to inquire what it is now. Are the practices of which all other nations have complained, now reprobated by France? Are the principles of aggression and ambition on which she has acted laid aside? Have we any positive proof of these changes, or any reasonable cause to presume that such have taken place? It is a mistake to suppose that these principles were essentially connected with the Jacobinical form of Government, and therefore must stand or fall with such form. In one part, no doubt, the Jacobinical Government is at an end, in point of form; but in substance and essence all the other qualities of the Revolutionary Government are as much in force at this moment as they were in the days of Barrère and Robespierre.

What then the peculiar nature of the change that has recently taken place may be, or whether it be for the better or for the worse,

with respect to the people of France themselves, I shall leave others to decide. But if, we consider the change in relation to other Governments, and the degree of confidence which they ought to place in the future conduct of France, the only difference that I see between the present and any of her former Governments is this, that the others were derived from Republican Assemblies representing the people; and, though the people always, and these Assemblies often, were nothing but the blind instruments of the Executive, the appearance of the Constitution was still preserved; whereas all this is now at an end. No Form and substance are all now concentrated and consolidated in the hands of Bonaparte; and the Government now stands with a military despot at its head, with unlimited power and authority to revive the practice of forced loans and requisitions; to wield the force of the State as he pleases; and resort to all the resources of the Revolutionary Government. Upon this question I may expect to hear wisely as I have stated on the authority of the French themselves; there were no security afforded by the Government of France for a faithful observance of treaties with other nations; previous to the month of November last, whether it has afforded any since; and here I contend, if gentlemen will take a review of that interval, and all the circumstances attending it, that they will not find a single security in the present Government of that country which was not possessed by all those that preceded it; and that have been condemned as defective in that particular. Under these circumstances, recent overtures are made for opening a negotiation for peace. This proposition His Majesty's Ministers have thought proper to reject, assigning at the same time, as a reason, that, as all the former attempts made for that purpose had proved abortive, or, if successful, were followed by violation, nothing yet presented itself, arising out of the present Revolution, that promised any other termination to any negotiation which we might now enter upon, or afforded greater security than what we possessed before. To these observations I cheerfully subscribe. In the first place, we are not certain of the sincerity of the overture; and secondly, if we were, there is nothing of stability yet acquired by the present Government to satisfy us, that, if sincere, it affords security for the observance of treaty. This then is the outline of the argument that I mean to pursue; and I wish the House to consider, whether it would be consistent with the line of conduct which it has uniformly followed, and justified by the dreadful expence of blood and treasure to which we are indebted for our present situation, to risk it by entering into a negotiation with a Government of which we have had no experience; and which affords no security that we are aware of beyond

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any that preceded it. Laying aside then all personal considerations of Bonaparte, but viewing his Government, in a general and abstract point of view, as a recent assumption of power, I ask, What are the circumstances of confidence that it affords? What are the grounds on which we have security for the due observance of a treaty in the event of its conclusion? To ascertain these points, we must resort to the power with which we have to deal for a criterion by which to try the question. In doing this, we are sometimes decided by the character of the King of a country, sometimes by the conduct of his Ministers, and sometimes by the general conduct and character of the Government; but is there any one of these criteria to be found in the present case? Is there any one of its Ministers, or any thing in the Executive Power or Government of the country, of sufficient standing to afford any of these criteria? If then, in the present instance, we have none of these rules by which experience enables us to judge in treating with other powers, all rests upon the assertion of the party himself, declaring that he is of a pacific disposition, accredited, it is true, by his Ministers Talleyrand & for to him he has referred, as appears from the correspondence, to vouch for this pacific character. It is not this country's business, however, to judge the private character and conduct of Bonaparte. He is the repository of the power of France, and it is only as connected with that situation that we feel an interest in his disposition. In this view, then, I shall consider it; and here let it be understood, that it is far from my intention to enter into any abuse or railing against the character of Bonaparte; I disavow any such intention. At the same time, I must confess, I have an old national prejudice about me, so far influencing my judgment, as to make me regard the blasphemer of his God as not precisely that sort of man with whom I could wish to treat. But any objection of this kind I readily waive, and wish only to consider him in the character in which he forces himself upon the House, namely, as professing a pacific disposition, and proposing a negotiation for peace. I say I am bound to consider the character of the man as connected with his proposal, before I can feel sufficient inducement to tempt me to enter into negotiation. Sir, I put the question to the House, whether the person who represents himself as of a pacific character, and commits himself as a lover of peace, be that sort of man to whom I can look for sincerity in his proposition for a negotiation for peace, or fidelity in the event of successful issue. With regard to the first, I shall not enter into the history of the countries with which France has been concerned in a variety of transactions, executed through the medium of other Agents and Ministers. I shall refer merely to the cases in which

Bonaparte has been the only agent, the scenes in which he has been the sole performer. I shall not place to his account the contribution imposed on Hamburg, nor the conduct observed by France towards Spain and Portugal; but I shall refer you to the Cisalpine Republic, Naples, Venice, Genoa, Tuscany, and Sardinia; for in the case of all these, the conduct of France was the conduct of Bonaparte himself. With regard to Venice, what was his conduct to that State? He entered it on the faith of a previous proclamation, avowing that his sole object was to protect it from falling under the power of Austria. What was his first act? The dissolution of its Government. What was his second? His surrender of it to the very power against which he declared his only object was to afford it protection. What were the circumstances of his conduct with respect to the Cisalpine Republic? A proposal of a treaty of commerce and alliance was made to it by France, which the Government of that Republic had the audacity to decline; and for this free and just exercise of its rights, the persons who exercised it were punished by Bonaparte. With regard to Malta, we have never heard of any aggression committed by her against France, any ground or pretence of hostility; yet the attack upon that island was open, and that attack conducted by Bonaparte. The whole of this question would embrace a variety of instances of fraud and unprovoked aggression too numerous in detail; I shall therefore select only such as immediately apply to the proper object. What, then, I ask, has been the conduct of Bonaparte with regard to Egypt? It is not pretended that there was any aggression on the part of the Ottoman Porte. But what has been the conduct of Bonaparte? His last act, before he left that country, was to send a memorial to the Grand Vizier, stating that he came to it without any hostile intention; that his only object was to relieve him from the tyranny of the Beys; and that he (the Grand Vizier) had only to desire him to withdraw with his army, and the order should be instantly obeyed. But what does this man, who makes such pacific and friendly professions to the Grand Vizier, say, when writing to General Kieber? He desires him to enter into a negotiation with the Ottoman Porte, but to endeavour to prevent the evacuation of the country by the army, until after a general peace (which, of course, he might not suppose to be a chance of retaining that country). We have thus manifested our love of peace; yet all this unprecedented conduct to the Ottoman Porte, the old friend and ally of France, is the conduct of Bonaparte himself, in his proposal for negotiation, plays the double dealer with that government to whom he professes sincere attachment, while the negotiations to the respectable power whom he leaves

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hind are of a quite contrary import. These are the views of his character, of the most recent parts of his conduct, that I wish to consider; I regard him in the character in which he wishes to be understood, as a negotiator for peace; and I fancy the House has anticipated me in the inference which I mean to draw from them. This inference is, that, by the late Revolution, we are deprived of all the criteria of sincerity and fidelity which we ought to find in a power with which we would negotiate, and are obliged to rest on the sole character of the French Consul himself, with this disadvantage and strong objection to it, that there is not a single case on record in which he has not violated his faith; and I state it again, and I am ready to prove, that in all this catalogue of crimes he himself has been the actor of the principal parts; and *that* not only when acting under the order of Government, but from the uninfluenced impulse of his own mind, and the dictates of his own conscience, in which capacity he appears in the several transactions alluded to, and in all of which he has conducted himself in utter contempt of faith or friendship. If I am right in stating these facts, the conclusion I draw from them is, that we should be sure that there was something more of sincerity in the negotiation which he now proposes, than characterises that which he entered into with the Ottoman Porte; that there should be some proof, arising out of his conduct in the transactions with which he was connected, to evince a truly pacific disposition; but, unfortunately, nothing of this kind is to be found; the current runs the other way. In short, there is not a single step on which you can set foot, that you do not find marked with hostility and breach of faith. But it has been said, why not make the experiment? if it should not succeed, we should be just where we were before. This language, I know, has been held out of doors. But I ask, does any gentleman who hears me, seriously mean to say, that in the present relative situation of Europe, this would be an experiment perfectly innocent in its nature? If we succeeded in the last campaign in calling forth the exertions of foreign power, in exciting the energies of Europe, and in making the most illustrious efforts—if we have reason to be proud of the share we have contributed to these achievements, is it a matter of indifference to dissolve that connection to which they owe their birth, and to send the other nations of Europe scrambling for a peace, deserted and abandoned by us, their allies? Is this, I say, a matter of indifference? and yet this would be the first effect of an acceptance of the overture. But this question I shall leave others to decide. I shall only contend, that without something to rest upon for sincerity in the proposal, and fidelity in the observance, it would be a degree of insa-

nity to open a negotiation. On this point, I may be told, that the present reduced state of France affords an ample security; but this is a double-edged weapon, that may cut both ways. The weakness of France may produce a desire for negotiation, for the purpose of gaining time, recruiting her strength, and assuming a more formidable attitude; but it affords no proof of desire (when her private views shall be attained) to conclude the negotiation when entered upon, or to observe it when concluded. Are we then, I ask, to stretch out our hands to nurse and uphold the usurpation of Bonaparte, to assist him to consolidate his power, and become the instruments of his strength, that we may see it, when opportunity shall occur, turned against the powers that created it? Sir, before this line of conduct shall be adopted, I hope Ministers will pause and weigh well the consequences to which it would lead. It is a dangerous experiment, and the moment it is made, there is an end of all the bright hopes which we feel. I therefore contend, that there is no force in this argument. But, it may be said, in case Bonaparte should not be sincere, are you in a worse situation than you were with the ancient line of French Princes? The difference between the two cases is as great as between light and darkness. I do not contend, that the House of Bourbon was not actuated by a spirit of aggrandizement; but how and in what manner has that spirit shewed itself, and been brought forward in action? Has this been effected under the ancient line of Princes, by the passions of the lowest classes of the people, by dissolving all the bonds of society, by bearing down all principles? These were not the engines resorted to by the old Government of France; yet it was in this manner, and under these circumstances, that the French Revolution has commenced its attack upon other nations. Sir, it is not France in arms that I dread; but I dread a Government founded upon principles which afford no security to other nations. The Government must therefore be overthrown, or its powers so reduced as to incapacitate it from wantonly injuring others. It is only in one of these two cases that this country can be brought to treat with France. The former I should prefer; for in the latter case we must never be off our guard, but keep the eyes of an Argus on her Constitution. Such are the principles that arise out of her present purer unadulterated Jacobinical Government. But I shall be told, that, according to this argument, we can have no peace with France, unless under a Prince of the House of Bourbon. This argument has been often stated and restated, and as often misrepresented. But now we have it upon record, where it is stated, that, however desirable such an event, the restoration of royalty in France is not the only security

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which we would accept against that Government, by which the world has been so much disturbed. Gentlemen have the text before them, and may make whatever comments their ingenuity can suggest. But I may be asked, why prefer the antient Government? The answer is two-fold. First, because we know the worst of the former Government. We met it before; we should know how to meet it again. The second reason is, because I should be extremely sorry that any Government should prove stable, which is founded on the principles of the present French Government; as the security of all nations calls out loudly against such an example; and it would be of the most dangerous consequence, were the nations of Europe to see, notwithstanding the combined opposition of various powers, a successful usurpation founded upon those principles which constitute the peculiar spirit, the heart's blood, I may say, of this Revolutionary Government; for I do not think it comparable with any other Revolution of which I have ever heard. As to the Revolution in this country, it was against the person of the Sovereign who had violated his engagements; but when the grievance complained of was removed, was there any question about principles? How unlike is this to a Revolution which has torn up all principles by the roots—which has broken all the bonds of society! I say, therefore, that it is the wish of my heart, that no Revolution founded on such principles should prosper. I do not confine it to the case of such a Revolution deposing a Monarchy; but, if the Government of France had been of any other form, and had been set aside by a Jacobinical Government, (*"hear! hear!"*) my objection to it would be equally strong. Sir, there is another topic mentioned in the official note, to the following purport: you have, it says, already wished to enter into negotiation with the Republic of France, why then decline it now? It does not follow, that because a measure might be prudent at one time, it must be so always; for it has been observed, that the treaty of Campo Formio has been productive of more blood and devastation than any other event of the present day. But I do not rely on this as an answer. I do admit, that, within these ten years past, this country has twice entered into negotiation with France; once at Paris, and once at Lille: but I contend, that there was no part of Administration that was not deeply impressed with a sense of danger at the time, in the event of such negotiation proving successful; that the feelings of Ministers were repugnant to the measure, and that the Government of the country would have found that a treaty (if concluded) would have proved a calamity. But notwithstanding this view of the subject entertained by Ministers, there were many collateral circumstances

which forced them to the measure. The body of the country allowed themselves to be deluded by false fears and speculations, that a longer continuance of war would induce insupportable taxes, and our resources must quickly be exhausted; and that it was prudent to try whether a peace might not be had on reasonable terms, to save us from the inevitable ruin which we dreaded from war? The attempt was therefore made, and proved unsuccessful; but let us not again sacrifice the honour of the country by adopting such a line of conduct. Let us not depress its spirit, and degrade ourselves, to be so stupid as not to learn some little wisdom from experience. For what did that attempt (which is now urged as a proper rule by which to regulate our conduct) prove? It proved, that there was no sincerity on the part of France in the course of the negotiation; for concessions were made by us, yielding every thing that a power that was not implacable could wish, and yet they did not satisfy. I need not mention what passed at Paris; at Lisle still greater terms were offered; but not all these were deemed sufficient. Has then the Government of France, I ask, changed since? Has not the expedition to Egypt and Switzerland happened since? And are not all these sufficient to decide the question of sincerity, and that repose is not their real object? Under these circumstances, I contend, there is no remedy but the overthrow of such a Government, or its weakness and inability to disturb the tranquillity of other States. Sir, let me ask whether, in the event of a peace having been then made, we should now be at war? ("hear! hear!") and whether the correspondence with the Irish Rebellion would not have gone on just as it has since done? I ask another question. Can there be a doubt that the expedition to Egypt would have taken place? It is true, there is no national treaty binding us to that country? yet, I believe there is no man that hears me, who believes that had that event taken place, we should now be at peace; I say there is not one, unless he can prove that we should sacrifice our most valuable possessions to France. No man will rejoice more than I do, when peace and tranquillity shall return; but in proportion as I wish for it, I must be anxious for its permanence, to avoid becoming the dupe of fallacious hopes. Sir, I have only one topic more, on which I shall be very brief. If at present we had successfully terminated negotiations, if the treaty of peace were actually signed, would you venture to disarm? Is there a man here who would advise His Majesty to disband his forces and dismantle his navy? How does Prussia stand? She has to support a large army to maintain her line of demarcation. How would you stand? You would have a garrison in every foreign colony; so that you would have all

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the expence of keeping up a great force without the power of exercising it. I say, therefore, that before you conclude a peace under such circumstances, you must consider whether it would not engage you to pledge yourselves to refrain from all hostility against France, leaving her at liberty to act against the different Governments of Europe, while your hands were tied up, and you were held back from every thing but the expence. Under these circumstances, I do not think this Government would act wisely, were it now to enter into negotiation. We have put no absolute negative on the question; we say that we will be guided by experience and the evidence of facts, in our judgment of *sincerity* and *fidelity*; without which qualities in a Government, all negotiation with it must prove either useless or injurious." Mr. Dundas concluded with moving an Address of thanks to His Majesty for his most gracious message.

Mr. WHITBREAD said, that having been always of opinion that this war might have been avoided in the first instance, and having uniformly opposed its progress, whenever occasion offered, he could not refrain from delivering his sentiments on the present subject of negotiation. The right honourable Secretary had set off artfully enough, by calling the attention of the House to all those enormities which had taken place since the commencement of the French Revolution, and asking if any person would now justify it? For his part, he (Mr. Whitbread) had ever maintained but one opinion on the subject, and he was free to say, that had it not been for the interference, the folly, and ambition of the other powers of Europe, the French Revolution would, at this time, have borne a very different complexion; but every attempt to repress its evils has only disseminated them wider. Added also to this, a worse effect followed, which was, the extinction of liberty in almost every part of Europe, under the pretext of counteracting the licentious principles of France. The right honourable gentleman had said, that from the commencement of the Revolution, France had shewn a sovereign contempt of treaties, and, within these ten years past had been at war with almost every State in Europe. In saying this, the right honourable gentleman had only pronounced his own panegyric; for he had informed the House, that he thought it his duty to invite every power in Europe to unite in one common cause against France, the common enemy of mankind. In this he had succeeded; but whether from want of good faith, ability, or power, the views of the allied powers had been frustrated, and the French Revolution had always risen superior to their adverse endeavours. The right honourable gentleman objected highly to the conduct of

the French Rulers in respect of neutral nations ; but did he not recollect the conduct of Prussia towards Hamburgh ? Did he forget Lord Hervey and Lord Hood, who ordered the French Ministers to be dismissed from Florence ? Did he forget Mr. Drake at Genoa, and the threats which induced that neutral power to dismiss her French inhabitants ? There certainly was a great oversight committed by the right honourable gentleman, in complaining so much of the French for that very crime in which we ourselves were equally involved. The want of good faith had been alledged as a reason for not negotiating with France : Mr. Whitbread said, he should be glad to know if His Majesty's Ministers had always acted upon principles of good faith in their former negotiations with France ? The right honourable gentleman had told the House that he feared they would have been successful [“No, no,” was repeated from the Treasury Bench].—Mr. Whitbread then corrected himself, by using the exact words of the right honourable gentleman, and next proceeded to remark on the mission of Lord Malmesbury to Paris. The Jacobin Government then existing was no obstacle to a negotiation in the estimation of his Lordship, or of those who sent him. He was not commissioned to insist on a renunciation upon their part of existing principles, or on acknowledgments tending to their own crimination. Yet, without these essentials, these preliminaries, his Lordship expected good faith on their part to any treaty that might have been concluded ; otherwise his attempt at negotiation could not have been sincere. But how did the present professions of Ministers agree with this their past conduct ? or how could the declaration of His Majesty be at all justified, unless we clearly understand that even a Jacobin Government may be treated with on principles of reciprocal good faith ? For His Majesty, even at a time when the country was elated by the victory of Lord Duncan, had declared his pacific wishes to the French nation. Things, however, were now changed, and His Majesty's Ministers had abandoned the idea of treating with a Jacobin Government, though it had been before no interdicted thing, but His Majesty had fairly and fully declared, that he was ready to treat with such a Government. Two attempts were made to this effect ; nor were the French to be justified for any share they might have in rendering them ineffectual.

In the second negotiation at Lisle, one set of negotiators were recalled, and a more Jacobinical set sent in their places ; still no objection was started to farther negotiation ; but His Majesty declared in the face of all Europe, that he was ready to conclude a treaty with them, if their overtures had been at all reconcilable to

the honour and interests of his subjects and his allies. A revolution in France now puts in power one person instead of five. This person thinks proper to make overtures to His Majesty; and this he does in a manner agreeable to the rights of civilized nations, and in no way incompatible with that respect which is due from one crowned head to another. [In saying *crowned head*, Mr. Whitbread disclaimed every intention on his part of softening, by any terms, whatever crime attached to the First Consul of France in his late assumption of power.] His power, however attained, if once consolidated, must, he said, be respected, as well as the most legitimate. But, as it now precariously stood, the House were called upon to consider on the propriety of negotiation; to discountenance which, many arguments had been drawn from the character of the First Consul, who was represented both as an infractor of treaties and an unprincipled blasphemer. Every topic that could revile, and every art that could blacken, had been resorted to, for the purposes of political slander; and he was very sorry to see, that the intercepted correspondence, strengthened and embellished with notes, and, perhaps too, garbled, had made its appearance with a view to prejudice the country against the Chief Consul, and thereby to set at a distance every hope of a negotiation for peace. It had been said by the right honourable gentleman, that since Bonaparte had been known to mankind, in no one instance had he ever observed a treaty, or kept an armistice. But before attention was paid to such vague assertion, or the House came to any conclusion, they should turn their eyes to matter of fact. It was not general declamation alone that should influence persons to vote for the proposed Address. If assertions had been made which were not true, the House should beware of reposing any farther confidence in those who had misled them. It was well known, that the preliminaries of Leoben were not broken, or the peace with Austria infringed, by Bonaparte; for before these events took place he had left Europe. Even by any influence in the Councils of France, he could not be supposed to have had a hand in the infractions of those treaties. The conduct of Bonaparte at Venice, Mr. Whitbread did not attempt to defend, any more than he did that of Austria. They were both alike culpable, and both, so far as their transactions at Venice went, equally worthy of being treated with. France at all times had been notorious for her want of faith in keeping treaties; but it was known also, that other Governments kept them no longer than they were found beneficial to them. England was now smarting under the treachery of Prussia, who took a subsidy from this country, and then ran away from her engagements. England, however, was said to be actuated

by nobler views, and to respect and adhere firmly to treaties. Mr. Whitbread said, he would put it to His Majesty's Ministers, whether they had not endeavoured repeatedly to provoke Austria and Prussia to an infraction of their treaties? Their charity, he was afraid, in this instance, began at home. This general charge of want of good faith he did not mean as any justification of the violation of treaties; but to shew, that if Ministers would treat with none but immaculate Governments, they could never expect to have an ally or friend. Another charge was brought against Bonaparte, namely, his conduct towards the Cisalpine Republic. But this was totally unmerited on his part, as it was the entire act of the Executive Directory. The right honourable gentleman then came to the Egyptian expedition, whose detail was said to be replete with horrors. Mr. Whitbread said, that before he would give credit to what was lately published concerning it in the intercepted letters, or form any judgment of the conduct of Bonaparte, he would beg to know if the documents laid before the public were just as they were found—nothing kept back, and nothing modified to answer any sinister purpose whatever? Waving this objection, however, he would take the letters just as they are; and on an examination of them, he could not but charge the right honourable gentleman with some degree of inaccuracy in his statements. It was said, that Bonaparte ordered General Kleber to negotiate with the Porte, but to delay the completion of the treaty till such time as he should hear from France. The completion of the treaty was the evacuation of Egypt, which Kleber might very well have been told to delay, without any reasonable charge of treachery on the side of Bonaparte. It was said, that he who could have invaded Egypt ought never to be treated with. To seize and colonize that country had always been a favourite scheme of the old Government of France. The only difference, therefore, between the two, is, that the new Government of France had executed what the old one had only planned. Treachery of that kind, however, was not confined to France, for Prussia could seize Silesia; and three of the first powers in Europe, while England was a tame spectator, could divide and appropriate to themselves the unfortunate kingdom of Poland. Yet Austria and Russia, the chief agents in this transaction, are still our good and true allies; and with this contradiction staring them in their faces, Ministers refuse to treat with one whom they deem treacherous and unjust. Bonaparte is full as good as they are; if he has broken treaties, so have they; if he has killed his ten thousands, Suwarrow also has killed his ten thousands. The right honourable gentleman had said what he wished to be the result of the

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war ; it was the reinstatement of the Bourbon family on the Throne of France ; and for this England was to be drained of her blood and treasure. If the conduct of Bonaparte was to be fairly considered, he might appear much more worthy of confidence than was generally supposed. His letter to His Majesty was full of good sense, equally free both from republican familiarity and courtly adulation. Preparatory to any negotiation, the right honourable gentleman seemed to suppose that it is necessary for Bonaparte to renounce all the principles of the former French Governments. This was completely done. He had said that His Majesty ruled in the hearts of his subjects ; and had changed his Address entirely from the Republican mode. This certainly was a tacit renunciation of the principles of his predecessors, and as much as could be expected from the Governor of a great nation. The perfidy of Bonaparte had been discerned in his attempt to make a separate peace ; but this disposition did not appear in the letters on the table. There was not one expression which could lead to suppose that he was less willing to treat with the allies of England than with England herself ; and, perhaps, had his first dispatches been treated with any reasonable consideration, the next courier sent by Bonaparte would have brought over his proposals for treating with those allies. Pacification now seemed to be the wish of Bonaparte ; this the whole tenor of his correspondence amply testified : and the forcible expressions he had made use of, though indirect, sufficiently proved that he meant to include our allies. All the arguments, therefore, drawn from a contrary supposition, to set aside a negotiation for peace, must be suspected of being rather unsound and fallacious. But let it be supposed, that while we refuse to negotiate (said Mr. Whitbread), our enemies act a contrary part, and seize the moment of pacific overture from Bonaparte. What then would be the consequence ? We should be left to negotiate then at some future time on grounds far less advantageous than the present. The right honourable gentleman seemed to forget the humiliating circumstances of a former negotiation, the necessity of which was dictated by a desertion of our allies. Such an event might happen again ; and how far it was prudent to submit the country to such a contingency, the House were then to judge. The present Government of France had met the unlimited, unqualified abuse of the right honourable gentleman ; it was unworthy of all confidence ; there could be no security in its most solemn treaties ; but the question still recurred, How could we treat with a former Government, stained with the same crimes, and chargeable with the same levity of councils ? The restoration of the antient line of Princes was a desirable event.

What, therefore, was asked of Bonaparte? or what had Ministers, in their communications with him, endeavoured to exact preparatory to a negotiation for peace? That Bonaparte should acknowledge himself an usurper, recant his principles, and descend from the throne that he now fills, to accommodate a branch of the family of Bourbon. Such was the very modest desire of Ministers, and what, no doubt, their sincerity had led them to suppose the Chief Consul would comply with. But was it really the wish of the people of England to lavish their blood and treasure to restore to the throne of France the family of Bourbon? There were, he knew, some fanatics who would contend for this; but he hoped their numbers were few. The majority of the people, he believed, possessed better sense, and would wish to fight in a better cause. The right honourable gentleman carried his veneration of the ancient royal family of France to an extravagant length, by an endeavour to palliate their crimes; if they were perfidious, their perfidy was of a noble kind; if ambitious, their ambition was of the most sublime nature. Mr. Whitbread asked, if the right honourable gentleman had forgotten the conduct of Louis the Fourteenth, in his seizure of Holland, and the perfidy of the Bourbon family during the American war, by which a whole Continent was separated from its mother State? It was from the perfidy of this family that the very Revolution itself might take its date. Louis the Fourteenth had acted the part of the most cruel tyrant, in his persecuting for religion, and extirpating, by the edict of Nantes, so many thousands of his best subjects. By such means were the affections of its subjects alienated from the Bourbon family; and was it the duty of this country to reverse the penalties they chose to inflict upon it? Could it be supposed that it was the duty of Englishmen to restore a banished King to his Throne, or the Pope to his Tiara? Mr. Whitbread then insisted, that we were now contending either for one or other of these two things: to reinstate a Bourbon on the Throne, or to exterminate the rest of those persons in France who held Jacobinical principles. If the former supposition was true, we were fighting, he thought, for an unattainable object, and the contest must be endless; if for the latter, we were fighting for an opinion; and both were equally absurd. Bonaparte himself had done more to ruin Jacobinism, than any other person, by taking all the executive authority into his own hands, destroying clubs, and repressing the licentiousness of the press. That great organ of sedition was now laid asleep. Bonaparte well knew that till that was done his situation could not be secure. It was denied that the war was continued to reinstate the family of Bourbon, however desirable such an

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event: the destruction of Jacobinism was already accomplished: for what then, it might be asked, was the war continued? Till Bonaparte had consolidated his power, and was able and willing to maintain his engagements. To some indefinite time, therefore, we were to go on, amidst all the calamities and expences of war. The farce of Lisle was to be repeated over and over again, as we found ourselves distressed—we were to sue for negotiations—receive some new insult—get the national spirit roused, and fight with redoubled vigour. The letter of Talleyrand had been urged as an apology for that of Lord Grenville. But if the first was objectionable, the second was respectful. It came in the way also which the forms of our Government required; neither did it contain one offensive expression. Such was the apparent sincerity of the present French Government. They would negotiate, if we would let them. So unexceptionable had their conduct been, that arguments drawn by Lord Grenville from the first letter were forced to be employed to answer a second, and a very different one. A complete negative, however, we are told, is not given to the overtures of Bonaparte for peace; and so far as this was the case, it might be fortunate for the country. Before, however, any decision was made on the present question, the House should consider the relative situation of this country with her allies. The allies do not appear to enter at all into each other's views; there seems to be no regular points of union between them—no community of interests. One of the coalitions against France had already failed, and a single fortunate event on the side of France might occasion a second dissolution of such heterogeneous materials. Austria did not pretend to have any communication or connexion with us—she had even refused our subsidies. The Emperor of Russia had declared *ipso facto* for the restoration of Royalty in France. England could not say quite so much on this subject, however it might be an object of her wishes. On this point it appeared to him that Russia was deceived, and we were also deceived with respect to the cordiality existing between Austria and Russia. In the foreign papers, one party blamed the other for its want of success in the latter part of the last campaign. No treaty existed between them that bound them to any one point, or united them in one system; but they were all moving in irregular orbits. Between Russia and England there could be no common cause. The alliance between Russia and the Porte was but a rope of sand. The Emperor of Russia evidently wished to aggrandise himself at the expence of the Porte. Could it be supposed, therefore, that the allies would ever act in any kind of concert, as one man? and, without this, combined operations could not well be

successful. Mr. Whitbread then brought to the recollection of the House the case of America, which had been insulted by France, and every thing at one time bore the appearance of hostility; yet the President of that country had pursued a line of conduct very different from what we had done, by appointing a person to negotiate between the two countries. This conduct the Ministers of this country might have adopted; its salvation, he thought, depended upon it. Mr. Whitbread concluded by saying, that, under our present circumstances, we ought not to refuse the proposals of Bonaparte for a general pacification; and that it was the interest of this country that a peace should be concluded as speedily as possible.

Mr. CANNING said, that much as he differed from the honourable gentleman who had just sat down, in the sentiments he had delivered (and he must say, that every sentiment he had uttered appeared to him unfounded in reason), yet there was no part of his speech which so much displeased him as his attempt to justify the enormities of the French, by saying, that we ourselves and our allies had been guilty of others little less flagrant. It had been stated by his right honourable friend who moved the Address, that the French had not only embroiled themselves in war with almost every nation in Europe, but that they had violated the neutrality of the few States with whom they remained at peace; and in answer to these incontrovertible facts, the honourable gentleman on the other side of the House had said, that Great Britain had shewn as little respect for the rights of neutral nations, when her interest required her to disregard them; and as a proof of this position, he had related our unwarrantable conduct to the Republic of Genoa and to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. If it had been such as the honourable gentleman had stated it to be, still could it be compared with the conduct of France to Hamburgh, to the Italian Republics, and to the Ottoman Porte? Although it were equally bad, still did that shew that France could be treated with, that she was sincere in her professions for peace, and capable of maintaining one if it were really concluded? But the circumstances were different from what they had been stated to be by the honourable gentleman; they were such as were completely consistent with the laws of nations, and with the dignity and justice of the British Government. When the French, in their destructive career, had penetrated into Italy, and were, notwithstanding a brave resistance, discomfiting our allies in almost every encounter, they at last arrived at the borders of Genoa. It was the duty of that state to have refrained from all intercourse with them, and not to have sent them the smallest assistance: instead of that,

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the Genoese had sent them clothes, provisions, military stores, and supplies of every description. Under these circumstances, had we not a right to order the Government of Genoa to dismiss the French Ambassador at the risk of our displeasure? What was there in this which was not sanctioned by the law of nations, and by the uniform practice of every State in Europe? Should we have quietly sat inactive, and seen unlawful measures taken for the destruction of our allies? Had the Genoese performed the duties of neutral nations, their rights would never have been infringed. He knew whence the honourable gentleman had drawn his information with regard to the transaction at Florence; and had that source been authentic, he could not so easily have justified the conduct of the British Government as in the instance he had mentioned. But the letter of Lord Hervey to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, issued from the same Jacobinical manufactory with the Treaties of Pavia and Pilnitz, like them, never had existed. Lord Hervey had taken measures for the preservation of British property in Leghorn, and to prevent, as far as was in his power, the Government of Tuscany from assisting the French; but he had done nothing for these purposes which the general practice of different nations did not entitle him to do. The Court of Florence had complained; but small States were always irritable, and, sensible that they are liable to insult, apt to think themselves insulted.

Great stress had been laid, both without doors and within, upon the declaration of His Majesty after the breaking off of the negotiation at Lisle; and occasion had been taken from that to censure and to calumniate His Majesty's Ministers for rejecting the overtures lately made by the enemy. But, in his opinion, little could be inferred from that declaration. It did not mean to say, that if at any future period the Government of France should be disposed to treat for peace, His Majesty would be ready to conclude it on the terms he had offered. The idea was absurd. If his arms should be crowned with victory for years, and the enemy, notwithstanding their disinclination to peace, should be overwhelmed with repeated disasters, and incapable of continuing the contest, could it be expected in equity that he would still accede to the terms he offered when circumstances were different? Immediately after the departure of our Ambassador from Lisle, it pleased Providence to bless His Majesty's arms with a signal victory, which it might have been thought, not unreasonably, would elate him and make him raise his pretensions. To do away these apprehensions, the declaration alluded to had been published; in which His Majesty said, that notwithstanding the important advantages he had obtained, he was still ready, if the French

were pacifically inclined, to treat upon the same equitable terms that he had proposed before this important advantage. The only object of the declaration was, to dissipate alarm, and to remove all bar to a treaty which the victory might have occasioned. But because he was willing to negotiate then upon these terms, does it follow that he ought to be so now? Notwithstanding the greatest change of circumstances, must a declaration be eternally binding? That manifesto had no force a few months after it was published, and we entered into the consideration of the present subject unfettered by any former promise or agreement. Our unqualified rejection of the overtures of the enemy was unquestionably right and consistent; since the experiment had already failed twice, should it follow that we should make a third without a change of circumstances? That no change had taken place was evident to every one. The same principles guided the conduct of the French which had actuated it at every stage of the Revolution; and until we had "experience and the evidence of facts," which he wished to become cant words on the present occasion, he thought that no credit should be given to their professions, and that their proposals for peace should not be listened to for a moment. Some people said, however, that though we rejected the overtures, it was highly impolitic in the very outset to talk of the restoration of Royalty; this was an unpardonable insult upon the Government of France, and a sure way to irritate the nation. If, notwithstanding their dreadful experience, there still remained in that unhappy country men who were enthusiastically attached to democracy; whose indignation was excited at the very name of King; who longed for the overthrow of every regular Government; who hated Religion and its Ministers; who looked with an evil eye upon all men of property and rank; who wished to reduce all the orders of the State into one undistinguished mass, where no one should rise above his neighbour, except from the perpetration of villany, and where the only inequality which would have prevailed would have been in the degrees of wretchedness, he would have thought that this appeal would be fruitless and not improbably hurtful. But was it probable, that after ten years of suffering; after seeing their commerce ruined, their navy destroyed, and all their colonies taken from them; after their being deprived of their property, and bereaved of their children, to carry on a war which is every way detrimental to them; after wading through seas of blood after the empty form of Liberty, which has so often eluded their grasp; after changing the mild sceptre of their sovereign for a rod of iron; after seeing in the venerable Throne of their antient Kings, a form, "if form it could be called which form had none,

and likeness of a Kingly Crown had on," a form which waved a sword in its hand, and made the people tremble before it. After all this, was it probable that they still bore an unconquerable antipathy to that line of Princes under whose mild sway they had lived so long so respectable abroad, and so happy at home? He had not a doubt that the people eagerly wished for the restoration of Monarchy, and that the usurpation of Bonaparte had been considered by most as a step to it. In that view, they had submitted to his dominion; but they would take the first opportunity of casting it off, and of restoring their native princes. Although they were not unanimous, it was our duty to consult principally our own interest, and that was materially concerned in overthrowing the present Government, the existence of which was incompatible with our security. Much had been said of the wickedness of the Bourbon Princes: many of their actions he would not undertake to defend; but the worst of them, surely, could not be compared with those of the present Jacobin Rulers of France. Besides, were we to infer that the conduct of their descendants would be equally unjustifiable. The honourable gentleman had looked back with triumph to the reign of King William. He did the same; he thought it one of the most splendid portions of our history; but it was not the skill of our Generals, the valour of our troops, nor the spirit of the people, which chiefly delighted him in looking back at that period. It was the unanimous support afforded by the Legislature to the Executive Government. He then read an Address voted by the House of Commons in the eighth year of the war, in which they assure His Majesty that, notwithstanding the enormous expence they had been already put to, they would still continue to support him, till a safe and honourable peace could be concluded. The Address, with little alteration, would answer the present occasion; and he could have wished to have seen it adopted. This honourable gentleman had reprobated the harsh language which had been used in speaking of Bonaparte. It was, no doubt, highly improper that any thing should be said or done which could be injurious to so respectable a personage; yet his character must be considered, since upon that depends the nature of the peace we should obtain, and from that consideration he was convinced that, though we had the name of peace, to its blessings we should be strangers. Look to those who have had the misfortune to treat with the French:—they had all soon reason to repent of their folly. Let us, by shunning their example, avoid their calamities. Did we carry on the war alone against opinion, all ground for continuing it would now, as has been asserted, be certainly at an end. We had certainly succeeded in subduing that spirit of innovation,

insurrection, and destruction, which was once so threatening ; but we had still to subdue that lust of conquest in the enemy—that thirst for dominion—and that hatred to England which at present actuates him. There was little hope of that being effected while the present Government subsisted. Bonaparte himself forced his character upon our consideration, and that proved to us that peace would be insecure. It was not asserted by the right honourable gentleman who opened the debate, that Bonaparte had been accessory to the infraction of every treaty which the French had infringed ; all that was meant was, that he himself had never kept any of the treaties he had made ; and that this was the case was notorious to the world. If he were of so pacific a disposition, it seemed rather strange that, after concluding the peace of Campo Formio, he should set out upon the Egyptian expedition, which he might have been certain would have retarded a peace with England. The last speaker had censured the conduct of Government in publishing the intercepted letters. He had heard that it had been said in another House, that the publisher of these letters was little better than the author ; but this observation, he believed, came from the same person who had said that the war was the cause of the present scarcity ; and a remark from a man of such intellect was not much to be regarded. In making them public, there was surely nothing unfair or ungenerous : the same thing had been done before by statesmen whom the honourable gentleman was accustomed to admire. In 1759 several letters of a similar nature were published in the Gazette ; and in the *Moniteur* might be seen several epistles from Austrian officers which General Bonaparte himself had intercepted. But perhaps we should take no advantage of any fortunate occurrence, but should remain inactive, while our enemies are setting every engine at work for our destruction. Supposing Bonaparte to be sincere in his professions, still a peace would be insecure. When France has so often of late changed her Rulers, what reason had we to suppose that she should continue long to obey the present one ? His Government was more arbitrary and despotic than any that had preceded it. Prescription may lend a kind of sacredness to established despotisms, and induce the people to submit to them ; but no new despotism could be permanent. It could be maintained alone by a military force ; and that was always a precarious tenure by which to hold supreme power : an upstart tyrant was insecure in the midst of his guards. This Constitution, as it is called, was still more detestable than any that had gone before it ; and unless it be upheld by some supernatural power, like that of the Weird Sisters, in *Macbeth*, it must soon be overthrown. He should be censured for these strictures by the same

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men who threw out the most illiberal abuse upon our allies. This was Jacobin justice. We should, it was said, make peace, because our allies will disagree. Perhaps they would: but, to enter into a treaty at present, on that account, were the same as if a general who had some fears for the fidelity of his troops, should, upon coming in sight of the enemy, dismiss them all without striking a blow. The success of the coalition depended upon England remaining at the head of it. Were she to withdraw, it would soon crumble into pieces; were she even to talk of negotiating, its ardour might be cooled and its exertions relaxed. There was now every prospect of the most perfect unanimity prevailing among the coalesced powers; and though, from some misunderstandings which had taken place, the end of the last campaign had been less fortunate than might have been expected, it was upon the whole unparalleled for brilliancy in the annals of history! Had any one foretold twelve months ago, that the French would possess at present scarcely one fortress in Italy, he would have been considered as a madman. It was impossible to say what might be effected in another campaign begun with such flattering prospects of success. If we succeed, we shall have the consolation to reflect, that by our spirit and our steadiness we have restored Europe to order, to tranquillity, and to happiness. Though we should fail in our endeavours, we shall not be galled by reflecting that we had let slip a favourable opportunity for making peace. There never could occur a season for treating more unfit than the present. By entering into any negotiation now, we should only throw a damp over the minds of our countrymen, introduce discord into the councils of our allies, and consolidate a power which would afterwards be employed for our destruction.

Mr. WHITBREAD explained.

Mr. ERSKINE said, that the House was assembled upon a most momentous occasion: they were assembled upon a new æra in the war; and without, for the moment, annexing any epithet to it, or adverting to its unparalleled calamities, it could not be denied that a NEW ÆRA, in any *possible war*, which led to a nearer prospect of peace, was a most critical and auspicious period. His Majesty's Ministers had undoubtedly considered the present proposition of the French Republic as by no means fit to be rejected, under the sanction of the *former* determinations of the House; because, if they had so considered it, they would not have advised the King to ask their opinion: no responsibility could have been attached to Ministers for acting upon the *former* Councils of Parliament; more especially as the answer sent to the proposition from thence was strictly within the province of the Executive Go-

vernments in the exercise of which *you were in doubt, and in-
tent as a last* Ministers were not only not bound to ask a sanction
for their proceedings, but it was not the practice of the Constitution
to come to the Lords and Commons for advice, much less in a
case where they had already delivered opinion after opinion for
years together. There existed, therefore, on the confession of
Ministers themselves, *a new era in the war*, on which Parliament
was called to deliberate, and to originate an opinion.

The advice which the House was called upon to deliver to His
Majesty had been by no means correctly stated by the right ho-
nourable Secretary, who had proposed the Address: the advice and
opinion desired by His Majesty could only be found in his gracious
message to the House, which had not only not been pursued in the
statement of the right honourable Secretary, but had been as if it
were studiously departed from. The question was *not*, whether
the King should have yielded to an immediate armistice, nor,
whether he should have at once opened a negotiation without consult-
ing with his allies; much less on *what* terms, or subject to *what*
qualifications a pacific proposition should have been taken into
consideration, or finally adopted; but, whether the House could
possibly fulfil His Majesty's expectation, as expressed in his
message, by signifying its approbation of the specific answer which
had been sent? Whether the House of Commons could say, in
the face of a suffering nation and a desolated world, that a lofty,
imperious, declamatory, insulting answer, to a proposition professing
peace and conciliation, was the answer which ought to have been
sent to France, or to any human Government? Whether this was
really the question for the consideration of the House upon the
King's message, was neither matter of argument nor opinion, but
matter of fact:—recourse could only be had to the message itself,
which he would read.

"His Majesty has thought proper, on this occasion, to direct that
there should be laid before the House, copies of communications recently
received from the enemy, and of the answers which have been re-
turned thereto, by His Majesty's command."

"His Majesty entertains the fullest confidence, that those
ANSWERS will appear to this House to HAVE BEEN CON-
FORMABLE TO THAT LINE OF CONDUCT WHICH WAS RE-
QUIRED FROM HIS MAJESTY ON THIS OCCASION, by his re-
gard to all the most important interests of his dominions."

It was plain, therefore, that they were called upon *not* to advise
His Majesty upon the terms of an armistice, or of an immediate
negotiation, but to ratify, or to condemn, the policy and terms of

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the *specific answer* which Ministers, upon their *own* authority, had previously sent to France. No materials had been laid before the House to enable it to judge of the fitness of an *immediate* armistice, or even of an unqualified acceptance of an *immediate* negotiation; because the one and the other might depend upon our engagements with other countries, and the actual position of the war. But to judge of the *unfitness* of the answer, the answer itself furnished a sufficient foundation; because, under *no circumstances, and at no time*, could such an answer be either wise or decent, from the Ministers of any nation, to any possible profession of conciliation and peace. Mr. Erskine said, that so far, therefore, from consenting to the Address which the Secretary of State had proposed to them, he was perfectly prepared to tell the King, that the answer, which he expected to be approved of by the House, was such as no reasonable men ought to approve; because it was rash, insolent, and provoking, without necessity. Whether Ministers ought at once to have acceded to the propositions made to them, or in what manner they ought to have qualified, or even evaded them, as wise policy might have dictated, His Majesty, as he had already observed, had not laid before the House materials for judging; neither did he (Mr. Erskine) mean so far to assume the character of a statesman, as to give an opinion on such points, above all without facts to go upon: but though he might not be able, so circumstanced, to determine what answer might have been right, he could, without the possibility of being mistaken, pronounce that the answer given was odiously and absurdly wrong. As a vindication of the war, it was loose, and, in some parts, unfounded; but as an answer to a pacific proposition, it was dangerous as a precedent to the universal interests of mankind: it rejected the very idea of peace, as if peace were a curse, and the demand of negotiation an insult; and held fast to war, as if war were an inseparable adjunct to the prosperity of nations. This was no figure; because every end of wise policy (if wise policy had even imperiously dictated the continuance of war) might have been reconciled by a milder answer. The King might have said, "That he saw with satisfaction the pacific disposition of the new Government of France, and would not question its sincerity, but that the various aggressions and injuries of her past Governments had involved the question of peace or war in many complicated considerations: that His Majesty had been obliged to combine with other nations for the security of his dominions, and the peace and order of Europe; that, so circumstanced, he could neither treat separately, nor in conjunction with his allies, without consultation."

“and abundant consideration; but that His Majesty would embrace the earliest occasion to return a more detailed answer to the proposition of the French Republic.”—Mr. Erskine did not at all mean to assert, that what he had hastily stated as a possible answer, would have been the proper one to have returned; nor was he prepared to say what would have been the fittest to adopt: his judgment was confined to a positive, unequivocal censure of the answer which had been sent, and of every other answer which, by bombast and petulant declamation, without any distinct meaning, seemed to have no other end or object than to remove peace to an incalculable distance. The answer appeared to him to have, most unadvisedly, put in issue the causes of the war, which the two nations could never, in the nature of things, be brought to agree upon, and which were wholly irrelevant to the question of a peace, which the groans and sufferings of the world so loudly and feelingly demanded. Whether England or France was the aggressor in the war could no longer be debated in that House with any possible effect, though posterity would sit in awful and impartial judgment on the question. It was a subject on which he had delivered an opinion, and which he had seen no reason to depart from; but he should have thought it the height of impertinence and folly to have come down to the House, expecting to produce any conviction on that subject, after the character and consistency of the House had been so long and so irretrievably pledged, both by its declarations and its conduct, for nine years together.

In bringing, therefore, before the House its different acts in the progress of the war, he did not call upon them to reverse their former judgments, by the censure which he called on them to pronounce on the answer to the proposals from France, but only to point out to them, that the same fatality of resisting peace, not upon specific injuries and complaints, but upon *general* and *undefined* objections to the state and condition and views of France, had characterized the war from the beginning; had been, indeed, the cause of it; and, if persisted in by the sanction of the measure in question, would lead to fruitless and endless hostility.

The French Revolution was undoubtedly in its beginning a great and awful event, which could not but extend its influence more or less to other nations. So mighty a fabric of despotism and superstition, after having endured for ages, could not fall to the ground without a concession which the whole earth would feel; but the evil of such a Revolution, if any there ever was to other nations, was only to be averted by cautious *internal* policy, and not by external war; unless it became impossible, from actual and not specu-

in the aggression, to maintain the relations of peace. The question was not whether the original or the present effects of the French Revolution were beneficial or dangerous, but what was our own policy and duty, as connected with their existence. The American Revolution, when it first broke out, was inveighed against by its opponents in the same extravagant and useless declamations; but a person who had long flourished in eloquence within these walls, had given the only fit answer to complaints of revolutions in other countries. "The question," said Mr. Burke, in moving his conciliation with America, "is not whether this condition of human affairs deserves praise or blame; but, *What, in God's name, are you to do with it?*" Had Ministers yet been able by eight years investive in this House to mitigate the evils of the French Revolution? On the contrary, after in a manner creating the worst of them, they had prevented them from subsiding, and provoked most of the excesses which now furnished the pretexts of perpetual and unavailing war.

When France cut off her most unfortunate Prince, and established her first Republic, she had an Ambassador at our Court: he was here, indeed, as the French King's Ambassador, but he presented letters of credence from the first Republic, with the most unqualified professions of respect and friendship. Mr. Erskine did not enter into their sincerity, because they were never tried: they were not only respectful in form, but the interest of France was an argument at least that they were not a fraud upon England. It had been said, that at that moment the aggressions of France were just causes of war: He had denied that formerly; he now denied it again, though he insisted that it was foreign to the just consideration of the subject before the House. If France had been guilty of aggressions, why did not England complain of these aggressions, and dismiss the Ambassador on refusal of satisfaction? Not a syllable of complaint was ever uttered against France, capable of being adjusted by negotiation. On the contrary, when Louis XVI. before his death, most feelingly and earnestly beseeched our mediation with the continental powers that threatened the tranquillity of France, we positively refused our mediation; and, on his death, we dismissed the Ambassador accredited by the Republic, for no other avowed reason than that France had tried and executed her King! What was that to England as a cause of war? If France, at that time, was engaged in projects inconsistent with peace, WHY WERE THEY NOT STATED? If any specific objections exist to peace at THIS MOMENT, why are they not now stated, and made the subject of negotiation or war? But *then*, as now, war was provoked and peace

rejected upon general and unjustifiable objections—upon speculative dangers to Religion and Government—which, supposing them to have existed with all their imaginary consequences, were more likely to be increased than diminished by the fury and bitterness of war. M. Chauvelin, with the olive branch in his hand, from the first Republic of France, was sent out of the country, on twenty-four hours' notice, not for any thing France was charged to have done as a national aggression towards this country, or other powers of Europe, but because France had beheaded her King.

On the 24th of January 1792, the King, by his Secretary of State, had most unfortunately been advised to declare to M. Chauvelin, that, after such an event (referring to the execution of the King at Paris), *His Majesty could not permit his residence any longer in England.* And, in the communication of this dismission to the two Houses of Parliament, in a few days afterwards, it was in terms expressed to be "ON ACCOUNT OF THE LATE ATROCIOUS ACT PERPETRATED AT PARIS." (The question, therefore, was not whether France had at that time been guilty of aggressions which might have justified war, but whether these aggressions had been complained of or acted upon, as the causes of hostilities which negotiation might have adjusted; and whether, on the contrary, a pretext for war had not been furnished to France by dismission of her Ambassador, for a cause which it was impossible to reconcile either with prudence or the law of nations. At that time Ministers were repeatedly implored, from this side of the House, not to invite war upon principles which made peace dependent, in a great measure, upon systems and forms of Government, and not upon the conduct of nations; upon theories, which could not be changed, instead of aggressions, which might be adjusted or corrected. At this period, and for a long time afterwards, France had a strong interest in peace; she had not extended her conquests, and her internal security was absolute; unfortunately we suffered these auspicious periods to pass away, and instead of negotiating a peace, with confederated and unexhausted nations in our train, by a distinct detail of the aggressions we had to complain of, and of the securities which they entitled us to demand for England and for Europe; Ministers, for two years together (though repeatedly warned of the impending misfortune), declared France to be incapable of the relations of amity, and left her to seek and to act towards other nations, as other nations professed to seek and to act towards her. Europe had combined to extinguish France, and to place her without the pale of social community; France in her turn acted towards Europe on the same principles;

had desolated and ravaged whatever territories she occupied, and spread her conquests every where with the unexampled rapidity we have witnessed. What other consequences had Ministers to expect? Was it imagined that a powerful nation, so surrounded, would act merely on the defensive, or, that in the midst of a Revolution, which the confederacy of nations had rendered terrible, the rights of nations would be respected? No; we gave the different French Governments, by our conduct, a pretext for jealousy of every other European State, and, in a manner, goaded her on to the accomplishment of all the conquests which had since been the subject of just lamentation and complaint; the confederacy of nations which Great Britain kept up against her, obliged her to maintain mighty armies in her defence; but such a war could not be long defensive. Defence was often only practicable by the boldness of invasion; and the armies of France, which other nations had, in a manner, created, were turned loose to feed upon them. Ambitious projects, not, perhaps, originally contemplated, followed their steps, and the world was changed with portentous violence, because the Ministers of Great Britain had resolved that, if it changed at all, it should revert to establishments which had reached their period and expired.

Mr. Erskine then said, that what he wished principally to impress upon the House, as connected with their present deliberations, and as a caution not to let slip the present auspicious period, was, that when Ministers at various periods during the war had been pressed not to reject peace by general objections to the capacity of France to maintain the relations of amity, they had, by persisting in that irrational system, produced the very evils which the war was intended upon to avert. Our enemies uniformly increased in strength, keeping pace on their side with the hostile mind on ours; and which every day became more severe and unrelenting. In this manner we conducted ourselves till Holland was overrun; the Netherlands annexed to the Republic; our principal allies detached from the confederacy; some of them connected in alliance with the enemy; and what was worse than all, schemes of extension and aggrandizement allowed and acted upon; which not only had not existed before the war, but which the war had absolutely created. Since, even after the first provocation, by the dismissal of Chauvelin, and even after repeated refusals to consider France as a civilized nation, she did not set up her pretensions of boundary, nor begin her career of conquest, until confederated Europe had furnished her with the pretext, at least of concealing her ambition under the cover of maintaining her Government and securing its

tranquillity and independence. Mr. Erskine said, that the accumulated evils of procrastination on such a subject, and upon such principles, were not truths to be maintained by arguments or proofs, but had been confessed by Ministers themselves by something more than words—by *their own conduct*: for, no sooner had the French Republic been re-organized in 1795, on the ruins of Robespierre's tyranny, and that Constitution established which had been lately overthrown, than Ministers, of *their own accord*, without any pacific proposition from France, such as they had received at this moment, advised His Majesty to inform Parliament, "*that the crisis depending at the beginning of that Session, had led to such a state of things as enabled His Majesty to MEET any disposition to negotiation on the part of the enemy, in just and reasonable terms*." How His Majesty was to *meet* any such disposition from a nation which lay under a parliamentary ban of incapacity from England, never reversed by any declaration to that country, and which France could never consider as reversed by the King of Great Britain's declaration to his own Parliament without communication to her, it was not easy to conceive. That consideration was then pressed on Ministers to urge them to take an *active* step in the important work of peace; but whether they were right or wrong in not going farther, was not the question of to night. He desired to ask the House, how it was possible, consistently with this declaration of His Majesty, in 1795, which had received the sanction of the House, for Ministers to send such an insisting answer to the present proposition of peace, and to ask our approbation of it? In 1795, without any pacific proposition from France, His Majesty had professed himself open to receive one: at that period the new Government of France was not above a month old; a Government not creating itself, like the present, over a people tired of theories, and wearied with the inevitable consequences of popular convulsions, but established at a time when the spirit of Democracy, which had been made the very pretext of all our own alarms, and of the incapacity of France, as a social Government, was yet at its very height. At that time, too, the alarm in England, from the probable contagion of French principles, by the intercourse of peace, was not only the favourite theme of Ministers, but was made the foundation of a system, by which some of our most essential liberties were abridged or suspended. The nation was stated to be full of plots, and Ireland was known to be on the brink of destruction; yet, at that moment, when, to add to the statement, near two hundred millions, since wrung from the people, remained unexhausted for the resources of war, Ministers, invited the infant, *Democracy*,

Jacobins, Regicides, Republic of France to propose a peace. On what possible principle then could the same House of Commons which sanctioned *that* proceeding, when *no* peace was offered, when *no* pacific spirit had even in profession been manifested, when France was in the very meridian of her Democracy, and in the full career of her desolating conquests, on what possible principle could the same House of Commons approve of the answer which, in the present state of things, had been sent? The danger from France was now greatly diminished, because the restless fury of that popular spirit, which had been the uniform topic of declamation, had not only subsided, from time and expansion, but was curbed, or rather extinguished, by the forms of the new Government, which invited us to peace. If sincerity in a foreign Government was a thing which could ever be correctly estimated or acted on, as a basis for listening to, or rejecting peace, there was more reason now than formerly for considering that Bonaparte was sincere. Surrounded with perils; at the head of an untried Government—menaced by a great confederacy, of which England was the grand prop and director—compelled to press heavily upon the resources of an exhausted people, whose power of renovating riches and prosperity were suspended by war—it was his interest undoubtedly to be at peace with England. But though it was thus his interest to negotiate, it might be no less the interest of this country to accept of it.

If Bonaparte found that his interest was served by an arrangement with England, the same interest would lead him to continue it. Looking to himself, and to his own power, he would make national sacrifices to preserve tranquillity, and England would thus acquire an additional influence in the scale of Europe; because no man in his senses, in the circumstances of Bonaparte, at this moment, having once reconciled, by wise policy, so mighty a power as Great Britain would run the risk of oversetting his own authority, by throwing her back again into the war, without the utmost and most unlooked-for provocations. The whole argument, therefore, was reduced to this; that because France was disposed to peace, we ought not. But no maxim could be more false, than that the policy of a nation was to be collected by resisting whatever the policy of an antagonist power had suggested: it was not true in the arrangements of commerce, or in the progress of riches and improvement; nor, indeed, in anything else. The interests of nations were, for the most part, reciprocal; and the interest of peace, to all nations, was an interest perpetual and universal. If Democracy was the evil, and the contagion of it a well-founded

apprehension, surely that apprehension was better founded in 1795 than at present: the popular societies, which at the former period had occasioned so much alarm, could not now re-organize themselves after the pattern of the French Assemblies; nor could the English multitude be misled by the view of a dominion exercised in France by the visible authority of the people. Our own country was also in a different situation; since, without admitting it to have been, in 1795, in the state which Ministers then represented it—still it was different. So mighty an event as the French Revolution, could not but affect and agitate the human mind on the subject of Government every where; and that agitation undoubtedly produced a strong attention to the abuses of our own: but no man could assert, that any such spirit, whether it was good or evil, existed at this moment; and the supposed existence of it formerly, had enabled Government to arm the whole nation, and to place it in the most absolute state of internal security. The sword was in the hand of the higher and middle orders of the people; and the domestic dangers which had been always held up as an argument against peace, were, in our present condition, wholly and permanently removed. Mr. Erskine farther said, that this disposition, or rather conduct of Ministers, in 1795, was not single or transitory: they continued from that period up to their present refusal to negotiate, to act upon the same principle: they continued to declare themselves ready to negotiate, and a year afterwards, viz. in November, 1796, actually sent Lord Malmesbury to Paris to propose a peace. At this period, not a syllable was insinuated of the danger of a peace with France, or of incapacity in her rulers, to maintain its relations. No difficulties were then opposed by Ministers on the pretexts which had existed formerly, and which have been revived to-day: on the contrary, the negotiation went off upon a point of difference in regard to terms; it broke off upon our insisting on the restoration of Belgium as the *sine qua non*. He had before him Lord Malmesbury's letter to Lord Grenville, which would bring it to the memory of the House:

"You then persist, said M. Delacroix, in applying this principle to Belgium? I answered, most certainly: and I should not deal fairly with you if I hesitated to declare in the outset of the negotiation, THAT ON THIS POINT YOU MUST ENTERTAIN NO EXPECTATION THAT HIS MAJESTY WILL RELAX, OR EVER CONSENT TO SEE BELGIUM A PART OF FRANCE."

And afterwards he says: "M. Delacroix again asked me, whether in his report he was to state the disuniting Belgium as a *sine qua*

"non, from which His Majesty would not depart." I replied, IT
 "MOST CERTAINLY WAS A SINE QUA NON, FROM WHICH
 "HIS MAJESTY WOULD NOT DEPART."

And again, in the very next paragraph: "*M. Delacroix repeated*
 "*his concern at the peremptory way in which I made this assertion;*
 "*and asked, whether it would admit of no modification?*" I replied,
 "*if France could, in a contre projet, point out a practicable and*
 "*adequate one, STILL KEEPING IN VIEW, THAT THE NETHER-*
 "*LANDS MUST NOT BE FRENCH, OR LIKELY AGAIN TO FALL*
 "*INTO THE HANDS OF FRANCE, such a proposal might cer-*
 "*tainly be taken into consideration."*

Here, then, was a negotiation entered upon, without objection or
 reserve; and broken off, not upon general incapacities to preserve the
 relations of amity, but upon specific differences. The termina-
 tion of this negotiation read an awful lesson to the House. At
 that moment France had not a soldier nor a foot of land in Italy;
 and a hundred and fifty millions of British property existed, which
 had since been spent upon war. Supposing all other points were
 capable of being adjusted, should we now insist on Belgium? Good
 God! had not Ministers themselves reminded us this very
 night, that in a few months afterwards, on the second mission of
 Lord Malmesbury, their *sine qua non* of the restoration of Belgium
 had been retracted, and that France broke off the negotiation
 upon other pretences?—She did so undoubtedly; but that was
 another awful warning against procrastination. Her position was
 changed; her spirit was altered; her ambition was inflamed; her
 views were extended; she was fired with the prospect of dominion
 and conquest; and the consequences were but too visible in the
 desolation of the earth which had ensued. When nations are
 provoked, security is not long the measure of their activity; and
 when they cannot exist without mighty armies, they must feed
 and employ them beyond their own frontiers, in the territories of
 other nations. He never meant to vindicate the conduct of France
 in the termination of the second negotiation: she shewed, undoubt-
 edly, no disposition to peace; and that aversion, on her part, gave
 great strength to Ministers, from the necessity of exertion on the
 part of this country: but for the argument of to-night, nothing
 could be more fatal to Ministers than that admission; because, for
 the very same reason, and upon the same unalterable principles, our
 aversion to peace at this moment would consolidate and increase
 the power of the present rulers of France.

But Ministers seemed to be so aware, that the inconsistency of
 their conduct, in being for years negotiating, and now suddenly re-

fusing to negotiate, would be insisted upon to-night from this side of the House, that the Secretary of State had himself anticipated the objection, and endeavoured to obviate it, (a thing not even attempted in another place.) They were impelled, it seems, to negotiate from the general wishes of the people; and they yielded to them, though they saw considerable danger in the success: this was more than he expected.—Though it did not amount to a confession of insincerity, it amounted, in his mind, to a justification of it, if it had existed; because he could well conceive conjunctures, in which, when the current of temporary opinion ran strongly against a system which Ministers had, from principle and opinion, adopted, they might rather *seem* to give way to the public disposition, than *really* to act upon it with energy, and in earnest, against the dictates of their own judgments, and the prosecution of their own systems. This course, however, could not be pursued without great management: and the sincerity of Statesmen, therefore, in the government of kingdoms, or in their transactions with foreign nations, could not be candidly assimilated to the truth and sincerity of private men. He could not, therefore, believe that Ministers put forth all their strength and zeal to forward negotiations, from the very success of which they apprehended so much danger: nevertheless, when their insincerity, at the former periods of the war, was urged against them in argument, no argument had ever been repelled by them with more apparent indignation; yet now, when they could no longer support even the colour of consistency, in rejecting the present proposition of peace, which they had before themselves incited, they changed their ground entirely, and almost admitted that their former negotiations had been forced on them, and that their failures had been rather an advantage than a misfortune.

Mr. Erskine then said, that having established, from the past conduct of Ministers, they were bound, upon their own principles, to negotiate at this moment, he would conclude the little he had to say, by shewing the manifest interest we had in listening to offers of peace. The present Government of France must either continue and establish its authority by wise policy and fortunate events, or it must perish in the storm of another Revolution: that surely was a self-evident proposition. It was no less a one, that the Government which overturned it must either be a Democratical Revolution of the French people from *within*, or the return of the House of Bourbon, placed upon their antient Throne, by the triumphant arms of the confederacy. If Bonaparte's Government became established and confirmed in its authority, it was admitted, after some undefined period of probation, we were in the end to consent to

peace; but was it certain that France would then be as willing as at present to be at peace with us? Fatal experience had taught us the contrary; for, after every interval when peace had been repelled by us, we had seen France in a more formidable aspect, and with a more alienated spirit. If, on the other hand, the Government of Bonaparte gave way to an *internal Democratic Revolution*, additional difficulties presented themselves: Ministers, upon their own principles, must put that new Government upon a similar state of probation, and so *in infinitum* any other establishment which might succeed in a revolutionary system. But what internal revolution might be expected to destroy Bonaparte's Government from within, if ever it should be destroyed? From whence could its destruction possibly come but from the revulsion of Democracy, overawed by armies, and chained down by the complicated forms of the present complex Government? In the event of such a Revolution, all our panicks would return upon us: the terror of French principles would again become predominant, and war would be persisted in, though ruinous and hopeless, to prevent the more dangerous contagion of opinions to be engendered by a peace. But was it Bonaparte we objected to? Was it the MAN and not the GOVERNMENT we mistrusted? Were we to make war then till his place was taken by some new Consul, though the present Government might remain? He did not mean to enter into any discussion of the character of this extraordinary person; but he would ask, whether the history of the world, much less the present state of France, moral or civil, furnished a reasonable expectation, that either accidents or new convulsions would raise up to power some character whose moderation and justice might be more safely reposed in? From the womb of Revolution and War, there had arisen in the world but one man of that description: there was but one WASHINGTON; alas! rather there only had been one—for, after having emancipated his country by his military skill, and founded her empire by his civil wisdom, it had pleased God to remove him from the world only a few months before the Government he might be said to have created, was fixing its seat in a city he had founded, and which was to carry his name, and the memory of genuine glory, to endless generations. No other alternative then remained but the restoration of the Bourbon House. He would not enter into what good could be expected for England from such an event: He would, in the teeth of all history and experience, suppose it to be auspicious, and confine himself to its practicability. He might assume the utter impossibility of such a change, except by the success of the confederacy: it must be, and only be, by

entering France at the head of hostile armies, and placing Louis XVIII. on the Throne : but not *placing* him only ; he must be *held upon it* by the pressure of the power which fixed him there ; and held upon it *against* the most obvious interests of the people of France, at least of that part of the people which have the most decided influence in all countries—the *people with whom property resided*.

The whole property of France, real and personal, in the hands of its present possessors, depended upon the existence of the present, or some similar Government. It was impossible to restore the Princes of the Bourbon House without restitution to those who had been exiled in its defence, which, in effect, raised up the whole property in the nation to support the Republic, whatever they might feel concerning its defects. The same principle supported the British Government far more than her Constitution, however estimable, and gave new strength to Ministers in proportion as they ceased to deserve it. The destruction which a revolution in this country would bring upon public credit, and the ruin and downfall which would attend all the forms and tenures on which every kind of property depended for its security, formed an insurmountable bulwark here at home : the three per cents. was the great fountain of loyalty and support to the establishments of Great Britain : every man who was invited to mix in revolutionary projects, above all as he advanced in life, and was fettered by its duties and obligations, considered these obstacles : he looked to his family, which he could still protect ; to his friends, to whom he could, in spite of our burthens, administer consolation ; and to his mortgages and lands, which furnished him with the only means to perform the duties, or to enjoy the delights of his existence. He felt so strongly the operation of these, that even if he could very distinctly anticipate the future advantages of a Revolution, yet if it certainly were to bring on for the present the calamities he had adverted to, he should feel disposed to cast the sacrifice upon the rising generation, who might, after bearing the burthens, endure till the advantages came round to them. These feelings were not peculiar to this nation, but to every nation similarly circumstanced. It appeared to him, therefore, impossible that the Bourbon House could ever re-establish its authority without convulsion after convulsion, and war after war, which, if Great Britain were embarked in the duty or necessity of mixing in and maintaining, would ultimately destroy her resources, cramp all her pursuits, which had created her greatness, and, perhaps, pull down the very Constitu-

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tion which we sought to support by means so repugnant to all the ends of wise and prudent Government.

But without resorting to the eventual or probable effects, none consequence of it appeared to be certain. Our insulting answer would confirm the very Government which we sought to destroy: it would produce unanimity at the very moment when nothing but division could support our cause. Upon the universal principles of human interest and feeling, it would raise up all France as a man against us: it would dissipate all lesser differences in the cause of common safety. The only way of judging of the effect of our answer, as a grand manifesto to unite all France, was to reverse the case, and to suppose that *we* had sent to France the pacific propositions, and that she had rejected it in the insulting language of *our* answer; that *we* had replied, putting aside the offence, and still inviting peace, and that *France* had finally referred to her first insulting refusal as her final determination. What would have been the consequence here? From what he felt in his own breast, he could rely upon the universal feelings of the country. He would have said to the right honourable gentleman, "However *we* have differed on the causes or conduct of the war, it is now my duty and my interest to support you in the prosecution of it. It is no longer matter of choice, but of necessity: I am not only bound in interest, but feel every sentiment of enthusiasm connected with the security and glory of my country." In the same manner, Frenchmen, of all descriptions, would reason on the present occasion; and that natural sentiment, when supported by the influence and power of their Government, would be irresistible: our answer would discomfit their rebellion, and recruit their armies. Bonaparte would have too good reason to forgive all the intemperate declamations against his character and dominion, when they furnished him with the surest means of advancing and confirming them. In every view, therefore, of the question, he was decidedly against expressing any approbation of the answer which had been sent. It appeared to him to be pregnant with danger, and entailed an awful responsibility upon those who had advised it, and upon those who supported it.

Mr. Chancellor PITT then rose, and spoke as follows:—Sir, I am induced, at this period of the debate, to offer my sentiments to the House, both from an apprehension that, at a later hour, the attention of the House must necessarily be exhausted, and because the sentiment with which the honourable and learned gentleman (Mr. Erskine) began his speech, and with which he has thought proper to conclude it, places the question precisely on that

ground on which I am most desirous of discussing it. The learned gentleman seems to assume, as the foundation of his reasoning, and as the great argument for immediate treaty, that every effort to overturn the system of the French Revolution must be unavailing; and that it would be not only imprudent, but almost impious, to struggle longer against that order of things, which, on I know not what principle of predestination, he appears to consider as immortal. Little as I am inclined to accede to this opinion, I am not sorry that the honourable gentleman has contemplated the subject in this serious view. I do, indeed, consider the French Revolution as the severest trial which the visitation of Providence has ever yet inflicted upon the nations of the earth; but I cannot help reflecting, with satisfaction, that this country, even under such a trial, has not only been exempted from those calamities which have covered almost every other part of Europe, but appears to have been reserved as a refuge and asylum to those who fled from its persecution, as a barrier to oppose its progress, and, perhaps, ultimately as an instrument to deliver the world from the crimes and miseries which have attended it.

Under this impression, I trust, the House will forgive me, if I endeavour, as far as I am able, to take a large and comprehensive view of this important question. In doing so, I agree with my honourable friend, that it would, in any case, be impossible to separate the present discussion from the former crimes and atrocities of the French Revolution; because both the papers now on the table, and the whole of the learned gentleman's argument, force upon our consideration the origin of the war, and all the material facts which have occurred during its continuance. The learned gentleman has revived and retailed all those arguments from his own pamphlet, which had before passed through thirty-seven or thirty-eight editions in print; and now gives them to the House, embellished by the graces of his personal delivery. The First Consul has also thought fit to revive and retail the chief arguments used by all the Opposition speakers, and all the Opposition publishers, in this country during the last seven years. And (what is still more material) the question itself, which is now immediately at issue—the question, whether, under the present circumstances, there is such a prospect of security from any treaty with France as ought to induce us to negotiate? cannot be properly decided upon, without retracing, both from our own experience, and from that of other nations, the nature, the causes and the magnitude of the danger against which we have to guard; in order to judge of the security, which we ought to accept.

I say, then, that before any man can concur in opinion with that learned gentleman; before any man can think that the substance of His Majesty's answer is any other than the safety of the country required; before any man can be of opinion, that to the overtures made by the enemy, at such a time, and under such circumstances, it would have been safe to have returned an answer concurring in the negotiation—he must come within one of the three following descriptions: He must either believe, that the French Revolution neither does now exhibit, nor has at any time exhibited, such circumstances of danger, arising out of the very nature of the system and the internal state and condition of France, as to leave to foreign powers no adequate ground of security in negotiation; or, secondly, he must be of opinion, that the change which has recently taken place, has given that security which, in the former stages of the Revolution, was wanting; or, thirdly, he must be one who, believing that the danger existed, not undervaluing its extent, nor mistaking its nature, nevertheless thinks, from his view of the present pressure on the country, from his view of its situation and its prospects, compared with the situation and prospects of its enemies, that we are, with our eyes open, bound to accept of inadequate security for every thing that is valuable and sacred, rather than endure the pressure, or incur the risk, which would result from a farther prolongation of the contest.

In discussing the last of these questions, we shall be led to consider, what inference is to be drawn from the circumstances and the result of our own negotiations in former periods of the war;—whether, in the comparative state of this country and France, we now see the same reason for repeating our then unsuccessful experiments; or whether we have not thence derived the lessons of experience, added to the deductions of reason, marking the inefficacy and danger of the very measures which are quoted to us as precedents for our adoption.

Unwilling, Sir, as I am, to go into much detail on ground which has been so often trodden before; yet, when I find the learned gentleman, after all the information which he must have received, if he has read any of the answers to his work (however ignorant he might be when he wrote it) still giving the sanction of his authority to the supposition, that the order to M. Chauvelin to depart from this kingdom was the cause of the war between this country and France, I do feel it necessary to say a few words on that part of the subject.

Inaccuracy in dates seems to be a sort of fatality common to all who have written on that side of the question; for even the writer

of the note to His Majesty is not more correct, in this respect, than if he had taken his information only from the pamphlet of the learned gentleman. The House will recollect the first professions of the French Republic, which are enumerated, and enumerated truly, in that note—they are tests of every thing which would best recommend a Government to the esteem and confidence of foreign powers, and the reverse of every thing which has been the system and practice of France now for near ten years. It is there stated, that their first principles were love of peace, aversion to conquest, and respect for the independence of other countries. In the same note, it seems, indeed, admitted, that they since have violated all those principles; but it is alledged that they have done so, only in consequence of the provocation of other powers. One of the first of those provocations is stated to have consisted in the various outrages offered to their Ministers, of which the example is said to have been set by the King of Great Britain in his conduct to M. Chauvelin. In answer to this supposition, it is only necessary to remark, that before the example was given, before Austria and Prussia are supposed to have been thus encouraged to combine in a plan for the partition of France; that plan, if it ever existed at all, had existed and been acted upon for above eight months: France and Prussia had been at war eight months before the dismissal of M. Chauvelin. So much for the accuracy of the statement.

[*Mr. Erskine here observed that this was not the statement of his argument.*]

I have been hitherto commenting on the arguments contained in the notes: I come now to those of the learned gentleman. I understand him to say, that the dismissal of M. Chauvelin was the real cause, I do not say of the general war, but of the rupture between France and England; and the learned gentleman states, particularly, that this dismissal rendered all discussion of the points in dispute impossible. Now I desire to meet distinctly every part of this assertion: I maintain, on the contrary, that an opportunity was given for discussing every matter in dispute between France and Great Britain, as fully as if a regular and accredited French Minister had been resident here; that the causes of war, which existed at the beginning, or arose during the course of this discussion, were such as would have justified, twenty times over, a declaration of war on the part of this country; that all the explanations on the part of France, were evidently unsatisfactory and inadmissible; and that M. Chauvelin had given in a peremptory ultimatum, declaring, that if these explanations were not received as sufficient, and if we

did not immediately disarm, our refusal would be considered as a declaration of war.

After this followed that scene which no man can even now speak of without horror, or think of without indignation; that murder and regicide from which I was sorry to hear the learned gentleman date the beginning of the legal Government of France.

Having thus given in their ultimatum, they added, as a farther demand (while we were smarting under accumulated injuries, for which all satisfaction was denied) that we should instantly receive M. Chauvelin as their Ambassador, with new credentials, representing them in the character which they had just derived from the murder of their sovereign. We replied, "he came here as the representative of a sovereign whom you have put to a cruel and illegal death; we have no satisfaction for the injuries we have received, no security from the danger with which we are threatened. Under these circumstances we will not receive your new credentials; the former credentials you have yourselves recalled by the sacrifice of your King."

What, from that moment, was the situation of M. Chauvelin? He was reduced to the situation of a private individual, and was required to quit the kingdom, under the provisions of the Alien Act, which, for the purpose of securing domestic tranquillity, had recently invested His Majesty with the power of removing out of this kingdom all foreigners suspected of revolutionary principles. Is it contended that he was, then, less liable to the provisions of that act than any other individual foreigner, whose conduct afforded to Government just ground of objection or suspicion? Did his conduct and connections here afford no such ground? or will it be pretended that the bare act of refusing to receive fresh credentials from an infant Republic, not then acknowledged by any one power of Europe, and in the very act of heaping upon us injuries and insults, was of itself a cause of war? So far from it, that even the very nations of Europe, whose wisdom and moderation have been repeatedly extolled for maintaining neutrality, and preserving friendship, with the French Republic, remained for years subsequent to this period, without receiving from it any accredited Minister, or doing any one act to acknowledge its political existence.

In answer to a representation from the belligerent powers, in December, 1793, Count Bernstorff, the Minister of Denmark, officially declared, that, "It was well known, that the National Convention had appointed M. Grouville Minister-Plenipotentiary at Denmark, but that it was also well known, that he had nei-

"ther been received nor acknowledged in that quality."*. And as late as February, 1796, when the same Minister was at length, for the first time, received in his official capacity, Count Bernstorff, in a public note, assigned this reason for that change of conduct—
 "So long as no other than a revolutionary Government existed in France, His Majesty could not acknowledge the Minister of that Government; but now that the French Constitution is completely organized, and a regular Government established in France, His Majesty's obligation ceases in that respect, and M. Grouville will therefore be acknowledged in the usual form."†
 How far the Court of Denmark was justified in the opinion, that a revolutionary Government then no longer existed in France, it is not now necessary to inquire; but whatever may have been the fact, in that respect, the principle on which they acted is clear and intelligible, and is a decisive instance in favour of the proposition which I have maintained.

Is it then necessary to examine what were the terms of that ultimatum, with which we refused to comply? Acts of hostility had been openly threatened against our allies; an hostility founded upon the assumption of a right which would at once supersede the whole law of nations; the pretended right to open the Scheldt, we discussed, at the time, not so much on account of its immediate importance, (though it was important both in a maritime and commercial view) as on account of the general principle on which it was founded. On the same arbitrary notion they soon afterwards discovered that sacred law of nature, which made the Rhine and the Alps the legitimate boundaries of France, and assumed the power which they have affected to exercise through the whole of the Revolution, of superseding, by a new code of their own, all the recognized principles of the law of nations. They were, in fact, actually advancing towards the Republic of Holland, by rapid strides, after the victory of Jemappe, and they had ordered their generals to pursue the Austrian troops into any neutral country: thereby explicitly avowing an intention of invading Holland. They had already shewn their moderation and self-denial, by incorporating Belgium with the French Republic. These lovers of peace, who set out with a sworn aversion to conquest, and professions of respect for the independence of other nations; who pretend that they departed from this system, only in consequence of your aggression, themselves in time of peace while you were still confessedly neutral, without the pretence or shadow of provocation,

* State Papers published for Debrett, vol. i. p. 338.

† *Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 306.

wrested Savoy from the King of Sardinia, and had proceeded to incorporate it likewise with France. These were their aggressions at this period ; and more than these. They had issued an universal declaration of war against all the Thrones of Europe ; and they had, by their conduct, applied it particularly and specifically to you : they had passed the decree of the 19th of November, proclaiming the promise of French succour to all nations who should manifest a wish to become free : they had, by all their language, as well as their example, shewn what they understood to be freedom : they had sealed their principles by the deposition of their sovereign : they had applied them to England, by inviting and encouraging the addresses of those seditious and traitorous societies, who, from the beginning, favoured their views, and who, encouraged by your forbearance, were even then publicly avowing French doctrines, and anticipating their success in this country : who were hailing the progress of those proceedings in France, which led to the murder of its King : they were even then looking to the day when they should behold a National Convention in England, formed upon similar principles.

And what were the explanations they offered on these different grounds of offence ? As to Holland ; they told you, the Scheldt was too insignificant for you to trouble yourselves about, and therefore it was to be decided as they chose, in breach of positive treaty, which they had themselves guaranteed, and which we by our alliance, were bound to support. If, however, after the war was over, Belgium should have consolidated its liberty, (a term of which we now know the meaning, from the fate of every nation into which the arms of France have penetrated) then Belgium and Holland might, if they pleased, settle the question of the Scheldt, by separate negotiation between themselves. With respect to aggrandizement, they assured us, that they would retain possession of Belgium by arms no longer than they should find it necessary to the purpose already stated, of consolidating its liberty. And with respect to the decree of the 19th of November, applied as it was pointedly to you, by all the intercourse I have stated with all the seditious and traitorous part of this country, and particularly by the speeches of every leading man among them, they contented themselves with asserting, that the declaration conveyed no such meaning as was imputed to it, and that, so far from encouraging sedition, it could apply only to countries where a great majority of the people should have already declared itself in favour of a Revolution ; a supposition which, as they asserted, necessarily implied a total absence of all sedition.

What would have been the effect of admitting this explanation? to suffer a nation, and an armed nation, to preach to the inhabitants of all the countries in the world, that they themselves were slaves, and their rulers tyrants: to encourage and invite them to revolution, by a previous promise of French support, to whatever might call itself a majority, or to whatever France might declare to be so. This was their explanation: and this they told you, was their ultimatum.

But was this all? Even at that very moment, when they were endeavouring to induce you to admit these explanations, to be contented with the avowal, that France offered herself as a general guarantee for every successful revolution, and would interfere only to sanction and confirm whatever the free and uninfluenced choice of the people might have decided, what were their orders to their generals on the same subject; in the midst of these amicable explanations with you, came forth a decree which I really believe must be effaced from the minds of gentlemen opposite to me, if they can prevail upon themselves for a moment to hint even a doubt upon the origin of this quarrel, not only as to this country, but as to all the nations of Europe with whom France has been subsequently engaged in hostility. I speak of the decree of the 15th of December. This decree, more even than all the previous transactions, amounted to an universal declaration of war against all Thrones, and against all civilized Governments. It said, wherever the armies of France shall come (whether within countries then at war or at peace is not distinguished), in all those countries it shall be the first care of their generals to introduce the principles and the practice of the French Revolution; to demolish all privileged orders, and every thing which obstructs the establishment of their New System.

If any doubt is entertained, whither the armies of France were intended to come: if it is contended that they referred only to those nations with whom they were then at war, or with whom, in the course of this contest, they might be driven into war; let it be remembered, that at this very moment, they had actually given orders to their generals to pursue the Austrian army from the Netherlands into Holland, with whom they were at that time in peace. Or, even if the construction contended for is admitted, let us see what would have been its application; let us look at the list of their aggressions, which was read by my right honourable friend (Mr. Dundas) near me. With whom have they been at war since the period of this declaration? With all the nations of Europe save two,* and if not

* Sweden and Denmark.

with those two, it is only because, with every provocation that could justify defensive war, those countries have hitherto acquiesced in repeated violations of their rights, rather than recur to war for their vindication. Wherever their arms have been carried, it will be a matter of short subsequent inquiry to trace whether they have faithfully applied these principles. If in terms, this decree is a denunciation of war against all Governments; if in practice it has been applied against every one with which France has come into contact; what is it but the deliberate code of the French Revolution, from the birth of the Republic, which has never once been departed from, which has been enforced with unremitted rigour against all the nations that have come into their power?

If there could otherwise be any doubt whether the application of this decree was intended to be universal; whether it applied to all nations, and to England particularly; there is one circumstance which alone would be decisive—that nearly at the same period it was proposed, in the National Convention,* to declare expressly, that the decree of the nineteenth of November was confined to the nations with whom they were then at war; and that proposal was rejected by a great majority; by that very Convention from whom we were desired to receive these explanations as satisfactory.

Such, Sir, was the nature of the system. Let us examine a little farther, whether it was from the beginning intended to be acted upon, in the extent which I have stated. At the very moment when their threats appeared to many little else than the ravings of madmen, they were digesting and methodizing the means of execution, as accurately as if they had actually foreseen the extent to which they have since been able to realize their criminal projects; they sat down coolly to devise the most regular and effectual mode of making the application of this system the current business of the day, and incorporating it with the general orders of the army; for (will the House believe it, this confirmation of the decree of the nineteenth of November was accompanied by an exposition and commentary addressed to the General of every army of France, containing a schedule as coolly conceived, and as methodically reduced, as any by which the most quiet business of a Justice of Peace, or the most regular routine of any department of State in this country could be conducted. Each Commander was furnished with one general blank formula of a letter for all the nations of the world! The People of France to the People of

Greeting:

* On a motion of M. Baraillon.

"We are come to expel your tyrants." Even this was not all; one of the articles of the decree of the fifteenth of December was expressly, "*that those who should shew themselves so brutish and so enamoured of their chains as to refuse the restoration of their rights, to renounce liberty and equality, or to preserve, recall, or treat with their Prince or privileged orders, were not entitled to the distinction which France, in other cases, had justly established between Government and People; and that such a people ought to be treated according to the rigour of war, and of conquest.*"* Here is their love of peace; here is their aversion to conquest; here is their respect for the independence of other nations!

It was then, after receiving such explanations as these, after receiving the ultimatum of France, and after M. Chauvelin's credentials had ceased, that he was required to depart. Even after that period, I am almost ashamed to record it, we did not on our part shut the door against other attempts to negotiate; but this transaction was immediately followed by the declaration of war, proceeding not from England in vindication of its rights, but from France as the completion of the injuries and insults they had offered. And on a war thus originating, can it be doubted, by an English House of Commons, whether the aggression was on the part of this country, or of France? or whether the manifest aggression on the part of France was the result of any thing but the principles which characterize the French Revolution?

What then are the resources and subterfuges by which those who agree with the learned gentleman are prevented from sinking under the force of this simple statement of facts? None but what are found in the insinuation contained in the note from France, that this country had, previous to the transactions to which I have referred, encouraged and supported the combination of other powers directed against them.

Upon this part of the subject, the proofs which contradict such an insinuation are innumerable. In the first place, the evidence of dates; in the second place, the admission of all the different parties in France; of the friends of Brissot charging on Robespierre the war with this country, and of the friends of Robespierre charging it on Brissot; but both acquitting England; the testimonies of the French Government during the whole interval, since the declaration of Pilnitz, and the pretended treaty of *Pavia*; the first of which had not the slightest relation to any project or partition of dismemberment; the second of which I firmly believe to be an

* *Vide* Decree of 15th December, 1792.

absolute fabrication and forgery ; and in neither of which, even as they are represented, any reason has been assigned for believing that this country had any share. Even M. Talleyrand himself was sent by the Constitutional King of the French, after the period when that concert, which is now charged, must have existed, if it existed at all, with a letter from the King of France, expressly thanking His Majesty for the neutrality which he had uniformly observed. The same fact is confirmed by the concurring evidence of every person who knew any thing of the plans of the King of Sweden in 1791 ; the only Sovereign who, I believe, at that time meditated any hostile measures against France, and whose utmost hopes were expressly stated to be, that England would not oppose his intended expedition ; by all those, also, who knew any thing of the conduct of the Emperor, or the King of Prussia ; by the clear and decisive testimony of M. Chauvelin himself in his dispatches from hence to the French Government, since published by their authority ; by every thing which has occurred since the war ; by the publications of Dumourier ; by the publications of Brissot ; by the facts that have since come to light in America, with respect to the mission of M. Genet ; which shew that hostility against this country was decided on the part of France long before the period when M. Chauvelin was sent from hence ; besides this, the reduction of our peace establishment in the year 1791, and continued to the subsequent year, is a fact from which the inference is indisputable : a fact which, I am afraid shews not only that we were not waiting for the occasion of war, but that, in our partiality for a pacific system, we had indulged ourselves in a fond and credulous security, which wisdom and discretion would not have dictated. In addition to every other proof, it is singular enough, that in a decree, on the eve of the declaration of war on the part of France, it is expressly stated, as for the first time, that England was then departing from that system of neutrality *which she had hitherto observed*.

But, Sir, I will not rest merely on these testimonies or arguments, however strong and decisive. I assert distinctly and positively, and I have the documents in my hand to prove it, that from the middle of the year 1791, upon the first rumour of any measure taken by the Emperor of Germany, and till late in the year 1792, we not only were no parties to any of the projects imputed to the Emperor, but, from the political circumstances in which we then stood with relation to that Court, we wholly declined all communications with him on the subject of France. To Prussia, with whom we were in connection, and still more decisively to Holland, with whom we were in close and intimate correspondence, we uniformly stated our

unalterable resolution to maintain neutrality, and avoid interference in the internal affairs of France, as long as France should refrain from hostile measures against us and our allies. No Minister of England had any authority to treat with Foreign States, even provisionally, for any warlike concert, till after the battle of Jemappe; till a period subsequent to the repeated provocations which had been offered to us, and subsequent particularly to the decree of fraternity of the 19th of November; even then, to what object was it that the concert which we wished to establish was to be directed? If we had then rightly cast the true character of the French Revolution, I cannot now deny that we should have been better justified in a very different conduct. But it is material to the present argument to declare what that conduct actually was, because it is of itself sufficient to confute all the pretexts by which the advocates of France have so long laboured to perplex the question of Aggression.

At that period, Russia had at length conceived, as well as ourselves, a natural and just alarm for the balance of Europe, and applied to us to learn our sentiments on the subject. In our answer to this application, we imparted to Russia the principles upon which we then acted, and we communicated this answer to Prussia, with whom we were connected in defensive alliance. I will state shortly the leading part of those principles. A dispatch was sent from Lord Grenville to His Majesty's Minister in Russia, dated the 29th of December, 1792, stating a desire to have an explanation set on foot on the subject of the war with France. I will read the material parts of it.

“ The two leading points on which such explanation will naturally turn, are the line of conduct to be followed previous to the commencement of hostilities, and with a view, if possible, to avert them; and the nature and amount of the forces which the powers engaged in this concert might be enabled to use, supposing such extremities unavoidable.

“ With respect to the first, it appears on the whole, subject, however to future consideration and discussion with the other powers, that the most advisable step to be taken would be, that sufficient explanation should be had with the powers at war with France, in order to enable those not hitherto engaged in the war to propose to that country terms of peace. That these terms should be, the withdrawing their arms within the limits of the French territory; the abandoning their conquests; the rescinding any acts injurious to the sovereignty or rights of any other nations, and the giving in some public and unequivocal manner a pledge of

“ their intention no longer to foment troubles, or to excite disturbances against other Governments. In return for these stipulations, the different powers of Europe, who should be parties to this measure, might engage to abandon all measures, or views of hostility against France, or interference in their internal affairs, and to maintain a correspondence and intercourse of amity with the existing powers in that country, with whom such a treaty may be concluded. If, on the result of this proposal so made by the powers acting in concert, these terms should not be accepted by France, or being accepted, should not be satisfactorily performed, the different powers might then engage themselves to each other to enter into active measures, for the purpose of obtaining the ends in view ; and it may be to be considered, whether, in such case, they might not reasonably look to some indemnity for the expences and hazards to which they would necessarily be exposed.”

The dispatch then proceeded to the second point, that of the forces to be employed, on which it is unnecessary now to speak.

Now, Sir, I would really ask any person who has been, from the beginning, the most desirous of avoiding hostilities, whether it is possible to conceive any measure to be adopted in the situation in which we then stood, which could more evidently demonstrate our desire, after repeated provocations, to preserve peace, on any terms consistent with our safety ; or whether any sentiment could now be suggested which would have more plainly marked our moderation, forbearance, and sincerity ? In saying this, I am not challenging the applause and approbation of my country, because I must now confess that we were too slow in anticipating that danger of which we had, perhaps, even then sufficient experience, though far short, indeed, of that which we now possess, and that we might even then have seen, what facts have since but too incontestably proved, that nothing but vigorous and open hostility can afford complete and adequate security against revolutionary principles, while they retain a proportion of power sufficient to furnish the means of war.

I will enlarge no farther on the origin of the war. I have read and detailed to you a system which was in itself a declaration of war against all nations, which was so intended, and which has been so applied, which has been exemplified in the extreme peril and hazard of almost all who for a moment have trusted to treaty, and which has not at this hour overwhelmed Europe in one indiscriminate mass of ruin, only because we have not indulged, in a fatal extremity, that disposition, which we have however indulged too far ; because we have not consented to trust to profession and compromise, rather than to our own valour and exertion, for security against a system,

from which we never shall be delivered till either the principle is extinguished, or till its strength is exhausted.

I might, Sir, if I found it necessary, enter into much detail upon this part of the subject; but at present I only beg leave to express my readiness at any time to enter upon it, when either my own strength, or the patience of the House will admit of it; but, I say, without distinction, against every nation in Europe, and against some out of Europe, the principle has been faithfully applied. You cannot look at the map of Europe, and lay your hand upon that country against which France has not either declared an open and aggressive war, or violated some positive treaty, or broken some recognized principle of the law of nations.

This subject may be divided into various periods. There were some acts of hostility committed previous to the war with this country, and very little indeed subsequent to that declaration, which abjured the love of conquest. The attack upon the Papal State, by the seizure of Avignon, in 1791, was accompanied with specimens of all the vile arts and perfidy that ever disgraced a revolution. Avignon was separated from its lawful sovereign, with whom not even the pretence of quarrel existed, and forcibly incorporated in the tyranny of One and Indivisible France. The same system led, in the same year, to an aggression against the whole German empire, by the seizure of Porentrui, part of the dominions of the Bishop of Basle. Afterwards, in 1792, unpreceded by any declaration of war, or any cause of hostility, and in direct violation of the solemn pledge to abstain from conquest, they made war against the King of Sardinia, by the seizure of Savoy, for the purpose of incorporating it, in like manner, with France. In the same year, they had proceeded to the declaration of war against Austria, against Prussia, and against the German empire, in which they have been justified only on a ground of a rooted hostility, combination, and league of Sovereigns, for the dismemberment of France. I say, that some of the documents, brought to support this pretence, are spurious and false; I say, that even in those that are not so, there is not one word to prove the charge principally relied upon, that of an intention to effect the dismemberment of France, or to impose upon it, by force, any particular constitution. I say, that as far as we have been able to trace what passed at Pilnitz, the declaration there signed referred to the imprisonment of Louis XVI. its immediate view was to effect his deliverance, if a concert sufficiently extensive could be formed with other sovereigns, for that purpose. It left the internal state of France to be decided by the King restored to his liberty, with the free consent of the states of his kingdom,

and it did not contain one word relative to the dismemberment of France.

In the subsequent discussions, which took place in 1792, and which embraced at the same time, all the other points of jealousy which had arisen between the two countries, the declaration of Pilnitz was referred to, and explained on the part of Austria in a manner precisely conformable to what I have now stated; and the amicable explanations which took place, both on this subject and on all the matters in dispute, will be found in the official correspondence between the two courts which has been made public; and it will be found that as long as the negotiation continued to be conducted through M. Delessart, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, there was a great prospect that those discussions would be amicably terminated; but it is notorious, and has since been clearly proved, on the authority of *Brissot* himself, that the violent party in France considered such an issue of the negotiation as likely to be fatal to their projects, and thought, to use his own words, that "war was necessary to consolidate the Revolution." For the express purpose of producing the war, they excited a popular tumult in Paris; they insisted upon and obtained the dismissal of M. Delessart. A new Minister was appointed in his room, the tone of the negotiation was immediately changed, and an ultimatum was sent to the Emperor, similar to that which was afterwards sent to this country, affording him no satisfaction on his just grounds of complaint, and requiring him, under these circumstances, to disarm. The first events of the contest proved how much more France was prepared for war than Austria, and afford a strong confirmation of the proposition which I maintain; that no offensive intention was entertained on the part of the latter power.

War was then declared against Austria; a war which I state to be a war of aggression on the part of France. The King of Prussia had declared, that he should consider war against the Emperor or empire as war against himself. He had declared, that, as a co-estate of the empire, he was determined to defend their rights; that, as an ally of the Emperor, he would support him to the utmost against any attack; and that, for the sake of his own dominions, he felt himself called upon to resist the progress of French principles, and to maintain the balance of power in Europe. With this notice before them, France declared war upon the Emperor, and the war with Prussia was the necessary consequence of this aggression, both against the Emperor and the empire.

The war against the King of Sardinia follows next. The declaration of that war was the seizure of Savoy, by an invading army;

and on what ground? On that which has been stated already. They had found out, by some light of nature, that the Rhine and the Alps were the natural limits of France. Upon that ground Savoy was seized; and Savoy was also incorporated with France.

Here finishes the history of the wars in which France was engaged, antecedent to the war with Great Britain, with Holland, and with Spain. With respect to Spain, we have seen nothing which leads us to suspect, that either attachment to religion, or the ties of sanguinity, or regard to the antient system of Europe, was likely to induce that Court to connect itself in offensive war against France. The war was evidently and incontestably begun by France against Spain.

The case of Holland is so fresh in every man's recollection, and so connected with the immediate causes of the war with this country, that it cannot require one word of observation. What shall I say then on the case of Portugal? I cannot indeed say, that France ever declared war against that country; I can hardly say even that she ever made war, but she required them to make a treaty of peace, as if they had been at war: she obliged them to purchase that treaty; she broke it as soon as it was purchased, and she had originally no other ground of complaint than this,—that Portugal had performed, though inadequately, the engagements of its antient defensive alliance with this country, in the character of an auxiliary; a conduct which cannot of itself make any power a principal in a war.

I have now enumerated all the nations at war at that period, with the exception only of Naples. It can hardly be necessary to call to the recollection of the House, the characteristic feature of revolutionary principles which was shewn, even at this early period, in the personal insult offered to the King of Naples, by the Commander of a French squadron, riding uncontrouled in the Mediterranean, and (while our fleets were yet unarmed) threatening destruction to all the coast of Italy.

It was not till a considerably later period that almost all the other nations of Europe found themselves equally involved in actual hostility: but it is not a little material to the whole of my argument, compared with the statement of the learned gentleman, and with that contained in the French note, to examine at what period this hostility extended itself. It extended itself, in the course of 1796, to the States of Italy which had hitherto been exempted from it. In 1797 it had ended in the destruction of most of them; it had ended in the virtual deposition of the King of Sardinia; it had ended in the conversion of Genoa and Tuscany into Democratic

Republics ; it had ended in the revolution of Venice, in the violation of treaties with the new Venetian Republic ; and finally, in transferring that very Republic, the creature and vassal of France, to the dominion of Austria.

I observe from the gestures of some honourable gentlemen, that they think we are precluded from the use of any argument founded on this last transaction. I already hear them saying, that it was as criminal in Austria to receive as it was in France to give. I am far from defending or palliating the conduct of Austria upon this occasion : but because Austria, unable at last to contend with the arms of France, was forced to accept an unjust and insufficient indemnification for the conquests France had made from it, are we to be debarred from stating what, on the part of France, was not merely an unjust acquisition, but an act of the grossest and most aggravated perfidy and cruelty, and one of the most striking specimens of that system which has been uniformly and indiscriminately applied to all the countries which France has had within its grasp. This only can be said in vindication of France (and it is still more a vindication of Austria), that, practically speaking, if there is any part of this transaction for which Venice itself has reason to be grateful, it can only be for the permission to exchange the embraces of French fraternity for what is called the despotism of Vienna.

Let these facts, and these dates, be compared with what we have heard. The honourable gentleman has told us, and the author of the note from France has told us also, that all the French conquests were produced by the operations of the allies. It was when they were pressed on all sides, when their own territory was in danger, when their own independence was in question, when the Confederacy appeared too strong ; it was then they used the means with which their power and their courage furnished them ; and, " attacked on all sides, they carried every where their defensive arms."* I do not wish to misrepresent the learned gentleman, but I understood him to speak of this sentiment with approbation : the sentiment itself is this, that if a nation is unjustly attacked in any one quarter by others, she cannot stop to consider by whom, but must find means of strength in other quarters, no matter where ; and is justified in attacking, in her turn, those with whom she is at peace, and from whom she has received no species of provocation.

* *Vide* M. Talleyrand's note.

Sir, I hope I have already proved, in a great measure, that no such attack was made upon France; but, if it was made, I maintain, that the whole ground on which that argument is founded cannot be tolerated. In the name of the Laws of Nature and Nations, in the name of every thing that is sacred and honourable, I demur to that plea, and I tell that honourable and learned gentleman that he would do well, to look again into the Law of Nations, before he ventures to come to this House, to give the sanction of his authority to so dreadful and execrable a system.

[*Mr. Erskine here said across the House, that he had never maintained such a proposition.*]

Mr. Pitt.—I certainly understood this to be distinctly the tenor of the learned gentleman's argument; but as he tells me he did not use it, I take it for granted he did not intend to use it: I rejoice that he did not: but, at least, then I have a right to expect, that the learned gentleman should now transfer to the French note some of the indignation which he has hitherto lavished upon the declarations of this country. This principle, which the learned gentleman disclaims, the French note avows; and I contend, without the fear of contradiction, it is the principle upon which France has uniformly acted. But while the learned gentleman disclaims this proposition, he certainly will admit, that he has himself asserted, and maintained in the whole course of his argument, that the pressure of the war upon France, imposed upon her the necessity of those exertions which produced most of the enormities of the Revolution, and most of the enormities practised against the other countries of Europe. The House will recollect, that, in the year 1796, when all these horrors in Italy were beginning, which are the strongest illustrations of the general character of the French Revolution, we had begun that negotiation to which the learned gentleman has referred. England then possessed numerous conquests; England, though not having at that time had the advantage of three of her most splendid victories, England, even then, appeared undisputed Mistress of the Sea; England, having then ingrossed the whole wealth of the Colonial World; England, having lost nothing of its original possessions; England then comes forward, proposing general peace, and offering—what? offering the surrender of all that it had acquired, in order to obtain—what? not the dismemberment, not the partition of ancient France, but the return of a part of those conquests, no one of which could be retained, but in direct contradiction to that original and solemn pledge which is now referred to, as the proof of the just and moderate disposition of the French Republic. Yet even this offer was not sufficient to pro-

cure peace, or to arrest the progress of France in her *defensive operations* against other unoffending countries. From the pages, however, of the learned gentleman's pamphlet (which, after all its editions, is now fresher in his memory than in that of any other person in this House, or in the country), he is furnished with an argument, on the result of the negotiation, on which he appears confidently to rely. He maintains, that the single point on which the negotiation was broken off, was the question of the possession of the Austrian Netherlands; and that it is, therefore, on that ground only, that the war has, since that time, been continued. When this subject was before under discussion, I stated, and I shall state again (notwithstanding the learned gentleman's accusation of my having endeavoured to shift the question from its true point), that the question, then at issue, was not, whether the Netherlands should, in fact, be restored; though even on that question I am not, like the learned gentleman, unprepared to give any opinion; I am ready to say, that to leave that territory in the possession of France would be obviously dangerous to the interests of this country, and is inconsistent with the policy which it has uniformly pursued, at every period in which it has concerned itself in the general system of the Continent; but it was not on the decision of this question of expediency and policy, that the issue of the negotiation then turned; what was required of us by France was, not merely that we should acquiesce in her retaining the Netherlands, but that, as a *preliminary* to all treaty, and before entering upon the discussion of terms, we should recognize the principle, that whatever France, in time of war, had *annexed* to the Republic must remain inseparable for ever, and could not become the subject of negotiation. I say, that, in refusing such a preliminary, we were only resisting the claim of France, to arrogate to itself the power of controlling, by its own separate and municipal acts, the rights and interests of other countries, and moulding, at its discretion, a new and general code of the Law of Nations.

In reviewing the issue of this negotiation, it is important to observe, that France, who began by abjuring a love of conquest, was desired to give up nothing of her own, not even to give up all that she had conquered; that it was offered to her to receive back all that had been conquered from her; and when she rejected the negotiation for peace upon these grounds, are we then to be told of the unrelenting hostility of the combined powers, for which France was to revenge itself upon other countries, and which is to justify the subversion of every established Government, and the destruction of property, religion, and domestic comfort, from one end of Italy to

the other? Such was the effect of the war against Modena, against Genoa, against Tuscany, against Venice, against Rome, and against Naples; all of which she engaged in, or prosecuted, subsequent to this very period.

After this, in the year 1797, Austria had made peace, England and its ally, Portugal (from whom we could expect little active assistance, but whom we felt it our duty to defend), alone remained in the war. In that situation, under the pressure of necessity, which I shall not disguise, we made another attempt to negotiate. In 1797, Prussia, Spain, Austria, Naples, having successively made peace, the Princes of Italy having been destroyed, France having surrounded itself, in almost every part in which it is not surrounded by the sea, with revolutionary republics, England made another offer of a different nature. It was not now a demand that France should restore any thing. Austria having made a peace upon her own terms, England had nothing to require with regard to her allies; she asked no restitution of the dominions added to France in Europe. So far from retaining any thing French out of Europe, we freely offered them all, demanding only, as a poor compensation, to retain a part of what we had acquired by arms, from Holland, then identified with France. This proposal also, Sir, was proudly refused, in a way which the learned gentleman himself has not attempted to justify, indeed of which he has spoken with detestation. I wish, since he has not finally abjured his duty in this House, that that detestation had been stated earlier, that he had mixed his own voice with the general voice of his country on the result of that negotiation.

Let us look at the conduct of France immediately subsequent to this period. She had spurned at the offers of Great Britain; she had reduced her continental enemies to the necessity of accepting a precarious peace; she had (in spite of those pledges repeatedly made and uniformly violated) surrounded herself by new conquests, on every part of her frontier but one; that one was Switzerland. The first effect of being relieved from the war with Austria, of being secured against all fears of continental invasion on the ancient territory of France, was their unprovoked attack against this unoffending and devoted country. This was one of the scenes which satisfied even those who were the most incredulous, that France had thrown off the mask, "*if indeed she had ever worn it.*"* It collected, in one view, many of the characteristic features of the revolutionary system which I have endeavoured to trace, the perfidy which alone rendered

* *Vide Speeches at the Whig Club.*

their arms successful, the pretext of which they availed themselves to produce division and prepare the entrance of Jacobinism in that country, the proposal of armistice, one of the known and regular engines of the Revolution, which was, as usual, the immediate prelude to military execution, attended with cruelty and barbarity, of which there are few examples: all these are known to the world. The country they attacked was one which had long been the faithful ally of France, which, instead of giving cause of jealousy to any other power, had been, for ages, proverbial for the simplicity and innocence of its manners, and which had acquired and preserved the esteem of all the nations of Europe; which had almost, by the common consent of mankind, been exempted from the sound of war, and marked out as a land of *Goshen*, safe and untouched in the midst of surrounding calamities.

Look then at the fate of Switzerland, at the circumstances which led to its destruction, add this instance to the catalogue of aggression against all Europe, and then tell me, whether the system I have described has not been prosecuted with an unrelenting spirit, which cannot be subdued in adversity, which cannot be appeased in prosperity, which neither solemn professions, nor the general law of nations, nor the obligation of treaties (whether previous to the revolution or subsequent to it), could restrain from the subversion of every state into which, either by force or fraud, their arms could penetrate. Then tell me, whether the disasters of Europe are to be charged upon the provocation of this country and its allies, or on the inherent principle of the French Revolution, of which the natural result produced so much misery and carnage in France, and carried desolation and terror over so large a portion of the world.

Sir, much as I have now stated, I have not finished the catalogue, America almost as much as Switzerland, perhaps, contributed to that change which has taken place in the minds of those who were originally partial to the principles of the French Government. The hostility against America followed a long course of neutrality adhered to, under the strongest provocations, or rather of repeated compliances to France, with which we might well have been dissatisfied. It was on the face of it, unjust and wanton; and it was accompanied by those instances of sordid corruption which shocked and disgusted even the enthusiastic admirers of revolutionary purity, and threw a new light on the genius of revolutionary Government.

After this, it remains only shortly to remind gentlemen of the aggression against Egypt, not omitting, however, to notice the capture of Malta, in the way to Egypt. Inconsiderable as that Island may be thought, compared with the scenes we have wit-

necessed, let it be remembered, that it is an island of which the government had long been recognized by every state of Europe, against which France pretended no cause of war, and whose independence was as dear to itself and as sacred as that of any country in Europe. It was in fact not unimportant from its local situation to the other powers of Europe, but in proportion as any man may diminish its importance, the instance will only serve the more to illustrate and confirm the proposition which I have maintained. The all-searching eye of the French Revolution looks to every part of Europe, and every quarter of the world, in which can be found an object either of acquisition or plunder. Nothing is too great for the temerity of its ambition, nothing too small or insignificant for the grasp of its rapacity. From hence Bonaparte and his army proceeded to Egypt. The attack was made, pretences were held out to the natives of that country in the name of the French King, whom they had murdered; they pretended to have the approbation of the Grand Seignior, whose territories they were violating; their project was carried on under the profession of a zeal for Mahometanism; it was carried on by proclaiming that France had been reconciled to the Mussulman Faith, had abjured that of Christianity, or as he in his impious language termed it, of *the Sect of the Messiah*.

The only plea which they have since held out to colour this atrocious invasion of a neutral and friendly territory, is, that it was the road to attack the English power in India. It is most unquestionably true, that this was one and a principal cause of this unparalleled outrage; but another, and an equally substantial cause (as appears by their own statements), was the division and partition of the territories of what they thought a falling power. It is impossible to dismiss this subject without observing that this attack against Egypt was accompanied by an attack upon the British possessions in India, made on true revolutionary principles. In Europe, the propagation of the principles of France had uniformly prepared the way for the progress of its arms. To India, the lovers of peace had sent the messengers of Jacobinism, for the purpose of inculcating war in those distant regions, on Jacobin principles, and of forming Jacobin Clubs, which they actually succeeded in establishing, and which, in most respects resembled the European model, but which were distinguished by this peculiarity, that they were required to swear in one breath, *hatred to Tyranny, the love of Liberty, and the destruction of all Kings and Sovereigns, except the good and faithful ally of the French Republic*, CITIZEN TIPPOO.

What then was the nature of this system? Was it any thing but what I have stated it to be?—an insatiable love of aggrandize-

ment, an implacable spirit of destruction against all the civil and religious institutions of every country. This is the first moving and acting spirit of the French Revolution; this is the spirit which animated it at its birth, and this is the spirit which will not desert it till the moment of its dissolution, "which grew with its growth, which strengthened with its strength," but which has not abated under its misfortunes, nor declined in its decay; it has been invariably the same in every period, operating more or less, according as accident or circumstances might assist it; but it has been inherent in the Revolution in all its stages, it has equally belonged to Brissot, to Robespierre, to Tallien, to Reubel, to Barras, and to every one of the leaders of the Directory, but to none more than to Bonaparte, in whom now all their powers are united. What are its characters? Can it be accident that produced them? No, it is only from the alliance of the most horrid principles, with the most horrid means, that such miseries could have been brought upon Europe. It is this paradox which we must always keep in mind when we are discussing any question relative to the effects of the French Revolution. Groaning under every degree of misery, the victim of its own crimes, and as I once before expressed it in this House, asking pardon of God and of man for the miseries which it has brought upon itself and others, France still retains (while it has neither left means of comfort, nor almost of subsistence to its own inhabitants), new and unexampled means of annoyance and destruction against all the other powers of Europe.

Its first fundamental principle was to bribe the poor against the rich, by proposing to transfer into new hands, on the delusive notion of equality, and in breach of every principle of justice, the whole property of the country; the practical application of this principle was to devote the whole of that property to indiscriminate plunder, and to make it the foundation of a revolutionary system of finance, productive in proportion to the misery and desolation which it created. It has been accompanied by an unwearied spirit of Profelytism, diffusing itself over all the nations of the earth; a spirit which can apply itself to all circumstances and all situations, which can furnish a list of grievances, and hold out a promise of redress equally to all nations, which inspired the teachers of French liberty with the hope of alike recommending themselves to those who live under the feudal code of the German empire; to the various states of Italy, under all their different institutions; to the old Republicans of Holland, and to the new Republicans of America; to the Catholic of Ireland, whom it was to deliver from Protestant usurpation; to the Protestant of Switzerland, whom it was to deliver

from Popish superstition ; and to the Mussulman of Egypt, whom it was to deliver from Christian persecution ; to the remote Indian, blindly begot to his antient institutions ; and to the natives of Great Britain, enjoying the perfection of practical freedom, and justly attached to their Constitution, from the joint result of habit, of reason and of experience. The last and distinguishing feature is a perfidy which nothing can bind, which no tie of treaty, no sense of the principles generally received among nations, no obligation, human or divine, can restrain. Thus qualified, thus armed for destruction, the genius of the French Revolution marched forth, the terror and dismay of the world. Every nation has in its turn been the witness, many have been the victims of its principles, and it is left for us to decide, whether we will compromise with such a danger, while we have yet resources to supply the sinews of war, while the heart and spirit of the country is yet unbroken, and while we have the means of calling forth and supporting a powerful co-operation in Europe.

Much more might be said on this part of the subject ; but if what I have said already is a faithful, though only an imperfect sketch of those excesses and outrages, which even history itself will hereafter be unable fully to represent and record, and a just representation of the principle and source from which they originated, will any man say that we ought to accept a precarious security against so tremendous a danger ? Much more will he pretend, after the experience of all that has passed, in the different stages of the French Revolution, that we ought to be deterred from probing this great question to the bottom, and from examining, without ceremony or disguise, whether the change which has recently taken place in France is sufficient now to give security, not against a common danger, but against such a danger as that which I have described.

In examining this part of the subject, let it be remembered, that there is one other characteristic of the French Revolution, as striking as its dreadful and destructive principles, I mean the instability of its Government, which has been of itself sufficient to destroy all reliance, if any such reliance could, at any time, have been placed on the good faith of any of its rulers. Such has been the incredible rapidity with which the Revolutions in France have succeeded each other, that I believe the names of those who have successively exercised absolute power, under the pretence of Liberty, are to be numbered by the years of the Revolution, and each of the new Constitutions, which, under the same pretence, has, in its turn, been imposed by force on France ; all of which alike were founded upon principles which professed to be universal, and was

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intended to be established and perpetuated among all the nations of the earth. Each of these will be found, upon an average, to have had about two years, as the period of its duration.

Under this revolutionary system, accompanied with this perpetual fluctuation and change, both in the form of the Government and in the persons of the Rulers, what is the security which has hitherto existed, and what new security is now offered? Before an answer is given to this question, let me sum up the history of all the revolutionary Governments of France, and of their characters in relation to other powers, in words more emphatical than any which I could use—the memorable words pronounced, on the eve of this last Constitution, by the orator * who was selected to report to an assembly, surrounded by a file of grenadiers, the new form of liberty which it was destined to enjoy under the auspices of General Bonaparte. From this reporter, the mouth and organ of the new Government, we learn this important lesson: “*It is easy to conceive why peace was not concluded before the establishment of the constitutional Government. The only Government which then existed, described itself as revolutionary; it was, in fact, only the tyranny of a few men who were soon overthrown by others, and it consequently presented no stability of principles or of views, no security either with respect to men, or with respect to things.*”

“*It should seem that that stability and that security ought to have existed from the establishment, and as the effect, of the constitutional system; and yet they did not exist more, perhaps even less, than they had done before. In truth, we did make some partial treaties, we signed a continental pence, and a general congress was held to confirm it; but these treaties, these diplomatic conferences, appear to have been the source of a new war, more inveterate and more bloody than before.*”

“*Before the 18th Fructidor (4th September) of the 5th year, the French Government exhibited to foreign nations so uncertain an existence, that they refused to treat with it. After this great event, the whole power was absorbed in the Directory; the legislative body can hardly be said to have existed; treaties of peace were broken, and war carried every where, without that body having any share in those measures. The same Directory, after having intimidated all Europe, and destroyed, at its pleasure, several Governments, neither knowing how to make peace or war, or how even to establish itself, was overturned by a breath, on the 13th Prairial (18th*

* Vile Speech of Boulay de la Meurthe, in the Council of Five Hundred, at St. Cloud, 19th Brumaire (9th November), 1799.

"June), to make room for other men, influenced, perhaps, by different views, or who might be governed by different principles.

"Judging, then, only from notorious facts, the French Government must be considered as exhibiting nothing fixed, neither in respect to men or to things."

Here, then, is the picture, down to the period of the last Revolution, of the state of France, under all its successive Governments!

Having taken a view of what it was, let us now examine what it is. In the first place, we see, as has been truly stated, a change in the description and form of the sovereign authority; a supreme power is placed at the head of this nominal Republic, with a more open avowal of military despotism than at any former period; with a more open and undisguised abandonment of the names and pretences under which that despotism long attempted to conceal itself. The different institutions, republican in their form and appearance, which were before the instruments of that despotism, are now annihilated; they have given way to the absolute power of one man, concentrating in himself all the authority of the State, and differing from other Monarchs only in this, that, as my honourable friend (Mr. Canning) truly stated it, he wields a sword instead of a sceptre. What then is the confidence we are to derive either from the frame of the Government, or from the character and past conduct of the person who is now the absolute Ruler of France?

Had we seen a man of whom we had no previous knowledge suddenly invested with the sovereign authority of the country; invested with the power of taxation, with the power of the sword, the power of war and peace, the unlimited power of commanding the resources, of disposing of the lives and fortunes of every man in France; if we had seen, at the same moment, all the inferior machinery of the Revolution, which, under the variety of successive shocks, had kept the system in motion, still remaining entire, all that, by requisition and plunder, had given activity to the revolutionary system of finance, and had furnished the means of creating an army, by converting every man, who was of age to bear arms, into a soldier, not for the defence of his own country, but for the sake of carrying the war into the country of the enemy; if we had seen all the subordinate instruments of Jacobin power subsisting in their full force, and retaining (to use the French phrase) all their original organization; and had then observed this single change in the conduct of their affairs, that there was now one man, with no rival to thwart his measures, no colleague to divide his powers, no council to controul his operations, no liberty of speaking or writing, no ex-

pression of public opinion to check or influence his conduct ; under such circumstances, should we be wrong to pause, or wait for the evidence of facts and experience, before we consented to trust our safety to the forbearance of a single man, in such a situation, and to relinquish those means of defence which have hitherto carried us safe through all the storms of the Revolution ? if we were to ask what are the principles and character of this stranger, to whom Fortune has suddenly committed the concerns of a great and powerful nation ?

But is this the actual state of the present question ? Are we talking of a stranger of whom we have heard nothing ? No, Sir ; we have heard of him ; we, and Europe, and the world, have heard both of him and of the satellites by whom he is surrounded ; and it is impossible to discuss fairly the propriety of any answer which could be returned to his overtures of negotiation, without taking into consideration the inferences to be drawn from his personal character and conduct. I know it is the fashion with some gentlemen to represent any reference to topics of this nature as invidious and irritating ; but the truth is, that they arise unavoidably out of the very nature of the question. Would it have been possible for Ministers to discharge their duty, in offering their advice to their Sovereign, either for accepting or declining negotiation, without taking into their account the reliance to be placed on the disposition and the principles of the person, on whose disposition and principles the security to be obtained by treaty must, in the present circumstances, principally depend : or would they act honestly or candidly towards Parliament and towards the Country, if, having been guided by these considerations, they forbore to state publicly and distinctly the real grounds which have influenced their decision ; and if, from a false delicacy and groundless timidity, they purposely declined an examination of a point, the most essential towards enabling Parliament to form a just determination on so important a subject ?

What opinion, then, are we led to form of the pretensions of the Consul to those particular qualities for which, in the official note, his personal character is represented to us as the surest pledge of peace ? We are told this is his second attempt at general pacification. Let us see, for a moment, how this attempt has been conducted. There is, indeed, as the learned gentleman has said, a word in the first declaration which refers to general peace, and which states this to be the second time in which the Consul has endeavoured to accomplish that object. We thought fit, for the reasons which have been assigned, to decline altogether the proposal of treating, under the present circumstances ; but we, at the same

time, expressly stated, that, whenever the moment for treaty should arrive, we would in no case treat, but in conjunction with our allies. Our general refusal to negotiate at the present moment does not prevent the Consul from renewing his overtures; but are they renewed for the purpose of general pacification? Though he had hinted at general peace in the terms of his first note; though we had shewn, by our answer, that we deemed negotiation, even for general peace, at this moment, inadmissible; though we added, that, even at any future period, we would treat only in conjunction with our allies; what was the proposal contained in his last note?—To treat for a separate peace between Great Britain and France.

Such was the second attempt to effect *general pacification*: a proposal for a *separate* treaty with Great Britain. What had been the first?—The conclusion of a *separate* treaty with Austria: and there are two anecdotes connected with the conclusion of this treaty, which are sufficient to illustrate the disposition of this pacification of Europe. This very treaty of Campo Formio was ostentatiously professed to be concluded with the Emperor, for the purpose of enabling Bonaparte to take the command of the army of England, and to dictate a separate peace with this country on the banks of the Thames. But there is this additional circumstance, singular beyond all conception, considering that we are now referred to the treaty of Campo Formio as a proof of the personal disposition of the Consul to general peace; he sent his two confidential and chosen friends, *Berthier* and *Monge*, charged to communicate to the Directory this treaty of Campo Formio; to announce to them, that one enemy was humbled, that the war with Austria was terminated, and, therefore, that now was the moment to prosecute their operations against this country; they used, on this occasion, the memorable words, "*the Kingdom of Great Britain and the French Republic cannot exist together.*" This, I say, was the solemn declaration of the deputies and ambassadors of Bonaparte himself, offering to the Directory the first fruits of this first attempt at general pacification.

So much for his disposition towards general pacification; let us look next at the part he has taken in the different stages of the French Revolution, and let us then judge whether we are to look to him, as the security against revolutionary principles; let us determine what reliance we can place on his engagements with other countries, when we see how he has observed his engagements to his own. When the Constitution of the third year was established under Barras, that Constitution was imposed by the arms of Bona-

part, then commanding the army of the Triumvirate in Paris. To that Constitution he then swore fidelity. How often he has repeated the same oath I know not; but twice, at least, we know that he has not only repeated it himself, but tendered it to others, under circumstances too striking not to be stated.

Sir, the House cannot have forgotten the Revolution of the 4th of September, which produced the dismissal of Lord Malmesbury from Lisle. How was that Revolution procured? It was procured chiefly by the promise of Bonaparte (in the name of his army), decidedly to support the Directory in those measures which led to the infringement and violation of every thing that the authors of the constitution of 1795, or its adherents, could consider as fundamental, and which established a system of despotism inferior only to that now realized in his own person. Immediately before this event, in the midst of the desolation and bloodshed of Italy, he had received the sacred present of new banners from the Directory; he delivered them to his army with this exhortation: "Let us swear, fellow soldiers, by the manes of the patriots who have died by our side, eternal hatred to the enemies of the Constitution of the Third year:" That very constitution which he soon after enabled the Directory to violate, and which, at the head of his grenadiers, he has now finally destroyed. Sir, that oath was again renewed, in the midst of that very scene to which I have last referred; the oath of fidelity to the Constitution of the third year was administered to all the Members of the Assembly then sitting (under the terror of the bayonet), as the solemn preparation for the business of the day; and the morning was ushered in with swearing attachment to the Constitution, that the evening might close with its destruction.

If we carry our views out of France, and look at the dreadful catalogue of all the breaches of treaty, all the acts of perfidy at which I have only glanced, and which are precisely commensurate with the number of treaties which the Republic have made (for I have sought in vain for any one which it has made and which it has not broken; if we trace the history of them all from the beginning of the revolution to the present time, or if we select those which have been accompanied by the most atrocious cruelty, and marked the most strongly with the characteristic features of the revolution, the name of Bonaparte will be found allied to more of them than that of any other that can be handed down in the history of the crimes and miseries of the last ten years. His name will be recorded with the horrors committed in Italy, in the memorable campaign of 1796 and 1797, in the Milanese, in Genoa, in Modena, in Tuscany, in Rome, and in Venice.

His entrance into Lombardy was announced by a solemn proclamation, issued on the 27th of April, 1796, which terminated with these words: "*Nations of Italy! the French army is come to break your chains, the French are the friends of the people in every country; your religion, your property, your customs, shall be respected.*" This was followed by a second proclamation, dated from Milan 20th of May, and signed, "*Bonaparte,*" in these terms: "*Respect for property and personal security; respect for the religion of countries: these are the sentiments of the government of the French Republic, and of the army of Italy. The French, victorious, consider the nations of Lombardy as their brothers.*" In testimony of this fraternity, and to fulfil the solemn pledge of respecting property, this very proclamation imposed on the Milanese a provisional contribution to the amount of twenty millions of livres, or near one million sterling; and successive exactions were afterwards levied on that single state to the amount, in the whole, of near six millions sterling. The regard to religion and to the customs of the country was manifested with the same scrupulous fidelity. The churches were given up to indiscriminate plunder. Every religious and charitable fund, every public treasure was confiscated. The country was made the scene of every species of disorder and rapine. The priests, the established form of worship, all the objects of religious reverence, were openly insulted by the French troops: at *Pavia*, particularly, the tomb of *St. Augustin*, which the inhabitants were accustomed to view with peculiar veneration, was mutilated and defaced. This last provocation having roused the resentment of the people, they flew to arms, surrounded the French garrison and took them prisoners, but carefully abstained from offering any violence to a single soldier. In revenge for this conduct, *Bonaparte*, then on his march to the *Minio*, suddenly returned, collected his troops, and carried the extremity of military execution over the country: he burnt the town of *Benasco*, and massacred eight hundred of its inhabitants; he marched to *Pavia*, took it by storm, and delivered it over to general plunder, and published, at the same moment, a proclamation, of the 26th of May, ordering his troops to shoot all those who had not laid down their arms, and taken an oath of obedience, and to burn every village where the *toesin* should be founded, and to put its inhabitants to death.

The transactions with *Modena* were on a smaller scale, but in the same character. *Bonaparte* began by signing a treaty, by which the Duke of *Modena* was to pay twelve millions of livres, and neutrality was promised him in return: this was soon followed by the personal arrest of the Duke, and by a fresh extortion of two hundred

thousand sequins ; after this he was permitted, on the payment of a farther sum, to sign another treaty, called a *Convention de Sureté*, which of course was only the prelude to the repetition of similar exactions.

Nearly at the same period, in violation of the rights of neutrality, and of the treaty which had been concluded between the French Republic and the Grand Duke of Tuscany in the preceding year, and in breach of a positive promise given only a few days before, the French army forcibly took possession of Leghorn, for the purpose of seizing the British property which was deposited there, and confiscating it as prize ; and shortly after, when Bonaparte agreed to evacuate Leghorn in return for the evacuation of the island of Elbe, which was in the possession of the British troops, he insisted upon a separate article, by which, in addition to the plunder before obtained, by the infraction of the law of nations, it was stipulated, that the Grand Duke should pay the expence, which the French had incurred by this invasion of his territory.

In the proceedings towards *Genoa* we shall find not only a continuation of the same system of extortion and plunder (in violation of the solemn pledge contained in the proclamations already referred to), but a striking instance of the revolutionary means employed for the destruction of independent governments. A French Minister was at that time resident at *Genoa*, which was acknowledged by France to be in a state of neutrality and friendship : in breach of this neutrality, *Bonaparte* began, in the year 1796, with the demand of a loan ; he afterwards, from the month of September, required and enforced the payment of a monthly subsidy, to the amount which he thought proper to stipulate : these exactions were accompanied by repeated assurances and protestations of friendship ; they were followed, in May, 1797, by a conspiracy against the Government, fomented by the emissaries of the French embassy, and conducted by the partizans of France ; encouraged, and afterwards protected by the French Minister. The conspirators failed in their first attempt ; overpowered by the courage and voluntary exertions of the inhabitants their force was dispersed, and many of their number were arrested. *Bonaparte* instantly considered the defeat of the conspirators as an act of aggression against the French Republic ; he dispatched an aid-de-camp with an order to the Senate of this independent state ; first, to release all the French who were detained ; secondly, to punish those who had arrested them ; thirdly, to declare that *they had had no share in the insurrection* ; and fourthly, to disarm the people. Several French prisoners were immediately released, and a proclamation was preparing to disarm the inhabitants, when, by a

second note, *Bonaparte* required the arrest of the three Inquisitors of State, and immediate alterations in the Constitution; he accompanied this with an order to the French Minister to quit Genoa, if his commands were not immediately carried into execution; at the same moment his troops entered the territory of the Republic, and shortly after the councils, intimidated and overpowered, abdicated their functions. Three deputies were then sent to Bonaparte to receive from him a new constitution; on the 6th of June, after the conferences at *Montebello*, he signed a convention, or rather issued a decree, by which he fixed the new form of their government; he himself named provisionally all the members who were to compose it, and he required the payment of seven millions of livres, as the price of the subversion of their constitution, and their independence. These transactions require but one short comment; it is to be found in the official account given of them at Paris, which is in these memorable words: "*General Bonaparte* has pursued the only line of conduct which could be allowed in the representative of a nation, which has supported the war only to procure the solemn acknowledgment of the right of nations, to change the form of their government. He contributed nothing towards the Revolution of Genoa, but he seized the first moment to acknowledge the new government, as soon as he saw that it was the result of the wishes of the people."*

It is unnecessary to dwell on the wanton attacks against *Rome*, under the direction of *Bonaparte* himself in the year 1796, and in the beginning of 1797, which terminated first, by the treaty of *Telentino* concluded by Bonaparte, in which, by enormous sacrifices, the Pope was allowed to purchase the acknowledgment of his authority, as a Sovereign Prince; and secondly, by the violation of that very treaty, and the subversion of the Papal authority by *Joseph Bonaparte*, the brother and the agent of the General, and the Minister of the French Republic to the Holy See: A transaction accompanied by outrages and insults towards the pious and venerable Pontiff (in spite of the sanctity of his age and the unfulfilled purity of his character), which even to a Protestant, seemed hardly short of the guilt of sacrilege.

But of all the disgusting and tragical scenes which took place in Italy, in the course of the period I am describing, those which passed at *Venice* are perhaps the most striking, and the most characteristic: In May, 1796, the French army, under Bonaparte, in the full tide of its success against the Austrians, first approached the territories of

* *Redacteur Officiel*, June 30, 1797.

this Republic, which from the commencement of the war had observed a rigid neutrality. Their entrance on these territories was as usual accompanied by a solemn proclamation in the name of their general. "*Bonaparte to the Republic of Venice.*" "It is to deliver "the finest country in Europe from the iron yoke of the proud house of "Austria, that the French army has braved obstacles the most difficult to surmount. Victory in union with Justice has crowned its "efforts. The wreck of the enemy's army has retired behind the "Mincio. The French army, in order to follow them, passes over "the territory of the Republic of Venice; but it will never forget, "that antient Friendship unites the two Republics. Religion, government, customs, and property, shall be respected. That the people "may be without apprehension, the most severe discipline shall be "maintained. All that may be provided for the army shall be "faithfully paid for in money. The general-in-chief engages the "officers of the Republic of Venice, the magistrates, and the priests, "to make known these sentiments to the people, in order, that confidence may cement that friendship which has so long united the "two nations, faithful in the path of honour, as in that of victory. "The French soldier is terrible only to the enemies of his liberty "and his government. *Bonaparte.*"*

This proclamation was followed by exactions similar to those which were practised against Genoa, by the renewal of similar professions of friendship, and the use of similar means to excite insurrection. At length, in the spring of 1797, occasion was taken from disturbances thus excited, to forge, in the name of the Venetian Government, a proclamation, † hostile to France; and this proceeding was made the ground for military execution against the country, and for effecting by force the subversion of its antient government and the establishment of the democratic forms of the French Revolution. This Revolution was sealed by a treaty, signed in May, 1797, between *Bonaparte* and Commissioners appointed on the part of the new and revolutionary Government of *Venice*. By the second and third secret articles of this treaty, Venice agreed to give as a ransom, to secure itself against all farther exactions or demands, the sum of three millions of livres in money, the value of three millions more in articles of naval supply, and three ships of the line; and it received in return the assurances of the friendship and support of the French Republic. Immediately after the signature

* *Vide* Debrett's State Papers, vol. v. p. 28.

† *Vide* Account of this transaction in the Proclamation of the Senate of Venice, April 12, 1798.—Debrett's State Papers, vol. vi. page 67.

of this treaty, the Arsenal, the Library, and the Palace of St. Marc, were ransacked and plundered, and heavy additional contributions were imposed upon its inhabitants: and, in not more than four months afterwards, this very Republic of Venice, united by alliance to France, the creature of Bonaparte himself, from whom it had received the present of French liberty, was by the same Bonaparte transferred under the treaty of *Campo Formio*, to “*that iron yoke of the proud House of Austria*,” to deliver it from which he had represented in his first proclamation to be the great object of all his operations.

Sir, all this is followed by the memorable expedition into Egypt, which I mention, not merely because it forms a principal article in the catalogue of those acts of violence and perfidy in which Bonaparte has been engaged; not merely because it was an enterprize peculiarly his own, of which he was himself the planner, the executor, and the betrayer; but chiefly because when from thence he retires to a different scene, to take possession of a new throne, from which he is to speak upon an equality with the Kings and Governors of Europe, he leaves behind him, at the moment of his departure, a specimen, which cannot be mistaken, of his principles of negotiation. The Intercepted Correspondence, which has been alluded to in this debate, seems to afford the strongest ground to believe, that his offers to the Turkish Government to evacuate Egypt were made solely with a view to gain time; that the ratification of any treaty on this subject was to be delayed with the view of finally eluding its performance, if any change of circumstances favourable to the French should occur in the interval. But whatever gentlemen may think of the intention with which these offers were made, there will at least be no question with respect to the credit due to those professions by which he endeavoured to prove, in Egypt, his pacific dispositions. He expressly enjoins his successor, strongly and steadily to insist in all his intercourse with the Turks, that he came to Egypt with no hostile design, and that he never meant to keep possession of the country; while, on the opposite page of the same instructions, he states in the most unequivocal manner, his regret at the discomfiture of his favourite project of colonizing Egypt, and of maintaining it as a territorial acquisition. Now, Sir, if in any note addressed to the Grand Vizier, or the Sultan, Bonaparte had claimed credit for the sincerity of his professions, that he came to Egypt with no view hostile to Turkey, and solely for the purpose of molesting the British interests; is there any one argument now used to induce us to believe his present professions to us, which might not have been equally urged on that occasion? Would not that profession

have been equally supported by solemn asseveration, by the same reference which is now made to personal character, with this single difference, that they would have then had one instance less of hypocrisy and falsehood, which we have since had occasion to trace in this very transaction.

It is unnecessary to say more with respect to the credit due to his professions, or the reliance to be placed on his general character : But it will, perhaps, be argued, that whatever may be his character, or whatever has been his past conduct, he has now an interest in making and observing peace. That he has an interest in making peace is at best but a doubtful proposition, and that he has an interest in preserving it is still more uncertain. That it is his interest to negotiate, I do not indeed deny ; it is his interest above all to engage this country in separate negotiation, in order to loosen and dissolve the whole system of the confederacy on the Continent, to paralyse, at once, the arms of Russia or of Austria, or of any other country that might look to you for support ; and then either to break off his separate treaty, or if he should have concluded it, to apply the lesson which is taught in his school of policy in Egypt ; and to revive, at his pleasure, those claims of indemnification which *may have been reserved to some happier period.**

This is precisely the interest which he has in negotiation ; but on what grounds are we to be convinced that he has an interest in concluding and observing a solid and permanent pacification ? Under all the circumstances of his personal character, and his newly acquired power, what other security has he for retaining that power, but the sword ? His hold upon France is the sword, and he has no other. Is he connected with the soil, or with the habits, the affections, or the prejudices of the country ? He is a Stranger, a Foreigner, and an Usurper ; he unites in his own person every thing that a pure Republican must detest ; every thing that an enraged Jacobin has abjured ; every thing that a sincere and faithful Royalist must feel as an insult. If he is opposed at any time in his career, what is his appeal ? *He appeals to his Fortune* ; in other words to his army and his sword. Placing, then, his whole reliance upon military support, can he afford to let his military renown pass away, to let his laurels wither, to let the memory of his trophies sink in obscurity ? Is it certain that, with his army confined within France, and restrained from inroads upon her neighbours, that he can maintain, at his devotion, a force sufficiently numerous to support his power ? Having no object but the possession

* *Vide Intercepted Correspondence from Egypt.*

of absolute dominion, no passion but military glory, is it to be reckoned as certain, that he can feel such an interest in permanent peace, as would justify us in laying down our arms, reducing our expence, and relinquishing our means of security, on the faith of his engagements? Do we believe, that after the conclusion of peace, he would not still sigh over the lost trophies of Egypt, wrested from him by the celebrated victory of Abukir, and the brilliant exertions of that heroic band of British seamen, whose influence and example rendered the Turkish troops invincible at *Acre*. Can he forget, that the effect of these exploits enabled Austria and Russia, in one campaign, to recover from France, all which she had acquired by his victories, to dissolve the charm, which, for a time, fascinated Europe, and to shew that their generals, contending in a just cause, could efface, even by their successes, and their military glory, the most dazzling triumphs of his victorious and desolating ambition?

Can we believe, with these impressions on his mind, that, if after a year, eighteen months, or two years, of peace had elapsed, he should be tempted by the appearance of fresh insurrection in Ireland, encouraged by renewed and unrestrained communication with France, and fomented by the fresh infusion of Jacobin principles; if we were at such a moment without a fleet to watch the ports of France, or to guard the coasts of Ireland, without a disposable army, or to an embodied militia, capable of supplying a speedy and adequate reinforcement, and that he had suddenly the means of transporting thither a body of twenty or thirty thousand French troops: can we believe, that at such a moment his ambition and vindictive spirit would be restrained by the recollection of engagements, or the obligation of treaty? Or, if in some new crisis of difficulty and danger to the Ottoman empire, with no British navy in the Mediterranean, no confederacy formed, no force collected to support it, an opportunity should present itself for resuming the abandoned expedition to Egypt, for renewing the avowed and favourite project of conquering and colonizing that rich and fertile country, and of opening the way to wound some of the vital interests of England, and to plunder the treasures of the East, in order to fill the bankrupt coffers of France? Would it be the interest of Bonaparte, under such circumstances, or his principles, his moderation, his love of peace, his aversion to conquest, and his regard for the independence of other nations? Would it be all, or any of these that would secure us against an attempt, which would leave us only the option of submitting, without a struggle, to certain loss and disgrace, or of renewing the contest which he had prematurely terminated, without allies, with-

out preparation, with diminished means, and with increased difficulty and hazard?

Hitherto I have spoken only of the reliance which we can place on the professions, the character, and the conduct of the present First Consul; but it remains to consider the stability of his power. The Revolution has been marked throughout by a rapid succession of new depositaries of public authority, each supplanting his predecessor; what grounds have we to believe that this new Usurpation, more odious and more undisguised than all that preceded it, will be more durable? Is it that we rely on the particular provisions contained in the code of the pretended Constitution, which was proclaimed as accepted by the French people, as soon as the garrison of Paris declared their determination to exterminate all its enemies, and before any of its articles could even be known to half the country, whose consent was required for its establishment?

I will not pretend to inquire deeply into the nature and effects of a Constitution, which can hardly be regarded but as a farce and a mockery. If, however, it could be supposed that its provisions were to have any effect, it seems equally adapted to two purposes, that of giving to its founder for a time an absolute and uncontrolled authority, and that of laying the certain foundation of disunion and discord, which, if they once prevail, must render the exercise of all the authority under the Constitution impossible, and leave no appeal but to the sword.

Is then military despotism that which we are accustomed to consider as a stable form of government? In all ages of the world, it has been attended with the least stability to the persons who exercised it, and with the most rapid succession of changes and revolutions. In the outset of the French Revolution its advocates boasted that it furnished a security for ever, not to France only but to all countries in the world, against military despotism; that the force of standing armies was vain and delusive; that no artificial power could resist public opinion; and that it was upon the foundation of public opinion alone that any government could stand. I believe, that in this instance, as in every other, the progress of the French Revolution has belied its professions; but so far from its being a proof of the prevalence of public opinion against military force, it is instead of the proof, the strongest exception from that doctrine which appears in the history of the world. Through all the stages of the Revolution military force has governed; public opinion has scarcely been heard. But still I consider this as only an exception from a general truth; I still believe, that, in every civilized country (not enslaved by a Jacobin faction) public opinion is the only sure support

of any government: I believe this with the more satisfaction, from a conviction, that if this contest is happily terminated, the established Governments of Europe will stand upon that rock firmer than ever; and whatever may be the defects of any particular constitution, those who live under it will prefer its continuance to the experiment of changes which may plunge them in the unfathomable abyss of revolution, or extricate them from it, only to expose them to the terrors of military despotism. And to apply this to France, I see no reason to believe, that the present usurpation will be more permanent than any other military despotism, which has been established by the same means, and with the same defiance of public opinion.

What, then, is the inference I draw from all that I have now stated? Is it, that we will in no case treat with Bonaparte? I say no such thing. But I say, as has been said in the answer returned to the French note, that we ought to wait for *experience*, and *the evidence of facts*, before we are convinced that such a treaty is admissible. The circumstances I have stated would well justify us if we should be slow in being convinced; but on a question of peace and war, every thing depends upon degree, and upon comparison. If, on the one hand, there should be an appearance that the policy of France is at length guided by different maxims from those which have hitherto prevailed; if we should hereafter see signs of stability in the Government, which are not now to be traced; if the progress of the allied army should not call forth such a spirit in France, as to make it probable that the act of the country itself will destroy the system now prevailing; if the danger, the difficulty, the risk of continuing the contest, should increase, while the hope of complete ultimate success should be diminished; all these, in their due place, are considerations, which, with myself and (I can answer for it) with every one of my colleagues, will have their just weight. But at present these considerations all operate one way; at present there is nothing from which we can presage a favourable disposition to change in the French Councils: There is the greatest reason to rely on powerful co-operation from our allies; there are the strongest marks of a disposition in the interior of France to active resistance against this new tyranny; and there is every ground to believe, on reviewing our situation, and that of the enemy, that if we are ultimately disappointed of that complete success which we are at present entitled to hope, the continuance of the contest, instead of making our situation comparatively worse, will have made it comparatively better.

If, then, I am asked how long are we to persevere in the war, I can only say, that no period can be accurately assigned beforehand.

Considering the importance of obtaining complete security for the objects for which we contend, we ought not to be discouraged too soon: but on the other hand, considering the importance of not impairing and exhausting the radical strength of the country, there are limits beyond which we ought not to persist, and which we can determine only by estimating and comparing fairly, from time to time, the degree of security to be obtained by treaty; and the risk and disadvantage of continuing the contest.

But, Sir, there are some gentlemen in the House, who seem to consider it already certain, that the ultimate success to which I am looking is unattainable: they suppose us contending only for the restoration of the French Monarchy, which they believe to be impracticable, and deny to be desirable for this country. We have been asked in the course of this debate, do you think you can impose Monarchy upon France, against the will of the nation? I never thought it, I never hoped it, I never wished it: I have thought, I have hoped, I have wished, that the time might come when the effect of the arms of the allies might so far overpower the military force which keeps France in bondage, as to give vent and scope to the thoughts and actions of its inhabitants. We have, indeed, already seen abundant proof of what is the disposition of a large part of the country; we have seen almost through the whole of the Revolution the western provinces of France deluged with the blood of its inhabitants, obstinately contending for their antient laws and religion. We have recently seen, in the revival of that war, fresh proof of the zeal which still animates those countries, in the same cause. These efforts (I state it distinctly, and there are those near me who can bear witness to the truth of the assertion) were not produced by any instigation from hence; they were the effects of a rooted sentiment prevailing through all those provinces, forced into action by the *Law of the Hostages* and the other tyrannical measures of the Directory, at the moment when we were endeavouring to discourage so hazardous an enterprise. If, under such circumstances, we find them giving proofs of their unalterable perseverance in their principles; if there is every reason to believe that the same disposition prevails in many other extensive provinces of France; if every party appears at length equally wearied and disappointed with all the successive changes which the Revolution has produced; if the question is no longer between Monarchy, and even the pretence and name of Liberty, but between the antient line of Hereditary Princes on the one hand, and a military tyrant, a foreign usurper, on the other; if the armies of that usurper are likely to find sufficient occupation on the frontiers, and to be forced at length

to leave the interior of the country at liberty to manifest its real feeling and disposition; what reason have we to anticipate, that the restoration of Monarchy, under such circumstances, is impracticable?

The learned gentleman has, indeed, told us, that almost every man now possessed of property in France, must necessarily be interested in resisting such a change, and that therefore it never can be effected. If that single consideration were conclusive against the possibility of a change, for the same reason the Revolution itself, by which the whole property of the country was taken from its antient possessors, could never have taken place. But though I deny it to be an insuperable obstacle, I admit it to be a point of considerable delicacy and difficulty. It is not, indeed, for us to discuss minutely what arrangement might be formed on this point to conciliate and unite opposite interests; but whoever considers the precarious tenure and depreciated value of lands held under the revolutionary title, and the low price for which they have generally been obtained, will think it, perhaps, not impossible that an ample compensation might be made to the bulk of the present possessors, both for the purchase-money they have paid, and for the actual value of what they now enjoy; and that the antient proprietors might be reinstated in the possession of their former rights, with only such a temporary sacrifice as reasonable men would willingly make to obtain so essential an object.

The honourable and learned gentleman, however, has supported his reasoning on this part of the subject, by an argument which he undoubtedly considers as unanswerable—a reference to what would be his own conduct in similar circumstances; and he tells us, that every landed proprietor in France must support the present order of things in that country from the same motive that he and every proprietor of three per cent. stock would join in the defence of the Constitution of Great Britain. I must do the learned gentleman the justice to believe, that the habits of his profession must supply him with better and nobler motives, for defending a Constitution which he has had so much occasion to study and examine, than any which he can derive from the value of his proportion (however large) of three per cents. even supposing them to continue to increase in price as rapidly as they have done, during the last three years, in which the security and prosperity of the country has been established by following a system directly opposite to the counsels of the learned gentleman and his friends.

The learned gentleman's illustration, however, though it fails with respect to himself, is happily and aptly applied to the state of France; and let us see what inference it furnishes with respect to the probable attachment of monied men to the continuance of the

revolutionary system, as well as with respect to the general state of public credit in that country. I do not, indeed, know that there exists precisely any fund of three per cents. in France, to furnish a test for the patriotism and public spirit of the lovers of French liberty. But there is another fund which may equally answer our purpose—the capital of three per cent. stock which formerly existed in France has undergone a whimsical operation, similar to many other expedients of finance which we have seen in the course of the Revolution—this was performed by a decree, which, as they termed it, *republicanised* their debt; that is, in other words, struck off, at once, two-thirds of the capital, and left the proprietors to take their chance for the payment of interest on the remainder. This remnant was afterwards converted into the present five per cent. stock.

I had the curiosity very lately to inquire what price it bore in the market, and I was told that the price had somewhat risen from confidence in the new Government, and was actually as high as *seventeen*. I really at first supposed that my informer meant seventeen years purchase for every pound of interest, and I began to be almost jealous of revolutionary credit; but I soon found that he literally meant seventeen pounds for every hundred pounds capital stock of five per cent. that is, a little more than three and a half years purchase. So much for the value of revolutionary property, and for the attachment with which it must inspire its possessors towards the system of Government to which that value is to be ascribed!

On the question, Sir, how far the restoration of the French Monarchy, if practicable, is desirable, I shall not think it necessary to say much. Can it be supposed to be indifferent to us or to the world, whether the Throne of France is to be filled by a Prince of the House of Bourbon, or by him whose principles and conduct I have endeavoured to develope? Is it nothing, with a view to influence and example, whether the fortune of this last adventurer in the Lottery of Revolutions, shall appear to be permanent? Is it nothing, whether a system shall be sanctioned which confirms by one of its fundamental articles, that general transfer of property from its ancient and lawful possessors, which holds out one of the most terrible examples of national injustice, and which has furnished the great source of revolutionary finance and revolutionary strength against all the powers of Europe?

In the exhausted and impoverished state of France, it seems for a time impossible that any system but that of robbery and confiscation, any thing but the continued torture, which can be applied only by the engines of the Revolution, can extort from its ruined inhabitants more than the means of supporting, in peace, the yearly expenditure

of its Government. Suppose, then, the Heir of the House of Bourbon reinstated on the Throne, he will have sufficient occupation in endeavouring, if possible, to heal the wounds, and gradually to repair the losses of ten years of civil convulsion; to reanimate the drooping commerce, to rekindle the industry, to replace the capital, and to revive the manufactures of the country. Under such circumstances, there must probably be a considerable interval before such a Monarch, whatever may be his views, can possess the power which can make him formidable to Europe; but while the system of the Revolution continues, the case is quite different. It is true, indeed, that even the gigantic and unnatural means by which that Revolution has been supported, are so far impaired; the influence of its principles, and the terror of its arms, so far weakened; and its power of action so much contracted and circumscribed; that against the embodied force of Europe, prosecuting a vigorous war, we may justly hope that the remnant and wreck of this system cannot long oppose an effectual resistance.

But, supposing the confederacy of Europe prematurely dissolved; supposing our armies disbanded, our fleets laid up in our harbours, our exertions relaxed, and our means of precaution and defence relinquished; do we believe that the revolutionary power, with this rest and breathing-time given it to recover from the pressure under which it is now sinking, possessing still the means of calling suddenly and violently into action whatever is the remaining physical force of France, under the guidance of military despotism; do we believe that this revolutionary power, the terror of which is now beginning to vanish, will not again prove formidable to Europe? Can we forget, that in the ten years in which that power has subsisted, it has brought more misery on surrounding nations, and produced more acts of aggression, cruelty, perfidy, and enormous ambition, than can be traced in the History of France for the centuries which have elapsed since the foundation of its monarchy, including all the wars which, in the course of that period, have been waged by any of those Sovereigns, whose projects of aggrandizement, and violations of treaty, afford a constant theme of general reproach against the ancient Government of France? And if not, can we hesitate whether we have the best prospect of permanent peace, the best security for the independence and safety of Europe, from the restoration of the lawful Government, or from the continuance of revolutionary power in the hands of *Benaparte*?

In compromise and treaty with such a power, placed in such hands as now exercise it, and retaining the same means of annoyance which it now possesses, I see little hope of permanent security.

I see no possibility at this moment of such a peace as would justify that liberal intercourse which is the essence of real amity ; no chance of terminating the expences or the anxieties of war, or of restoring to us any of the advantages of established tranquillity ; and as a sincere lover of peace, I cannot be content with its nominal attainment ; I must be desirous of pursuing that system which promises to attain, in the end, the permanent enjoyment of its solid and substantial blessings for this country, and for Europe. As a sincere lover of peace, I will not sacrifice it by grasping at the shadow, when the reality is not substantially within my reach——

Cur igitur pacem nolo ? Quia infida est, quia periculosa, quia esse non potest.

If, Sir, in all that I have now offered to the House, I have succeeded in establishing the proposition, that the system of the French Revolution has been such as to afford to foreign powers no adequate ground for security in negotiation, and that the change which has recently taken place has not yet afforded that security ; if I have laid before you a just statement of the nature and extent of the danger with which we have been threatened ; it would remain only shortly to consider, whether there is any thing in the circumstances of the present moment to induce us to accept a security confessedly inadequate against a danger of such a description.

It will be necessary here to say a few words on the subject on which gentlemen have been so fond of dwelling ; I mean our former negotiations, and particularly that at Lisle in 1797. I am desirous of stating frankly and openly the true motives which induced me to concur in then recommending negotiation ; and I will leave it to the House, and to the Country, to judge whether our conduct at that time was inconsistent with the principles by which we are guided at present. That revolutionary policy which I have endeavoured to describe, that gigantic system of prodigality and bloodshed by which the efforts of France were supported, and which counts for nothing the lives and the property of a nation, had at that period driven us to exertions which had, in a great measure, exhausted the ordinary means of defraying our immense expenditure, and had led many of those who were the most convinced of the original justice and necessity of the war, and of the danger of Jacobin principles, to doubt the possibility of persisting in it, till complete and adequate security could be obtained. There seemed, too, much reason to believe, that without some new measure to check the rapid accumulation of debt, we could no longer trust to the stability of that funding system, by which the nation had been enabled to support the expence of all

the different wars in which we have engaged in the course of the present century. In order to continue our exertions with vigour, it became necessary that a new and solid system of finance should be established, such as could not be rendered effectual but by the general and decided concurrence of public opinion. Such a concurrence in the strong and vigorous measures necessary for the purpose could not then be expected, but from satisfying the country, by the strongest and most decided proofs, that peace on terms in any degree admissible was unattainable.

Under this impression we thought it our duty to attempt negotiation, not from the sanguine hope, even at that time, that its result could afford us complete security, but from the persuasion, that the danger arising from peace under such circumstances was less than that of continuing the war with precarious and inadequate means. The result of those negotiations proved, that the enemy would be satisfied with nothing less than the sacrifice of the honour and independence of the country. From this conviction, a spirit and enthusiasm was excited in the nation, which produced the efforts to which we are indebted for the subsequent change in our situation. Having witnessed that happy change, having observed the increasing prosperity and security of the country from that period, seeing how much more satisfactory our prospects now are, than any which we could then have derived from the successful result of negotiation, I have not scrupled to declare, that I consider the rupture of the negotiation, on the part of the enemy, as a fortunate circumstance for the country. But because these are my sentiments at this time, after reviewing what has since passed, does it follow that we were, at that time, insincere in endeavouring to obtain peace? The learned gentleman, indeed, assumes that we were; and he even makes a concession, of which I desire not to claim the benefit: he is willing to admit, that on our principles, and our view of the subject, insincerity would have been justifiable. I know, Sir, no plea that would justify those who are entrusted with the conduct of public affairs, in holding out to Parliament and to the Nation one object, while they were, in fact, pursuing another. I did, in fact, believe, at the moment, the conclusion of peace (if it could have been obtained) to be preferable to the continuance of the war under its increasing risks and difficulties. I therefore wished for peace; I sincerely laboured for peace. Our endeavours were frustrated by the act of the enemy. If, then, the circumstances are since changed, if what passed at that period has afforded a proof that the object we aimed at was unattainable, and if all that has passed since has proved, that, if peace had been then made, it could not have been

endurable, are we bound to repeat the same experiment, when every reason against it is strengthened by subsequent experience, and when the inducements which led to it at that time have ceased to exist?

When we consider the resources and the spirit of the country, can any man doubt that if adequate security is not now to be obtained by treaty, we have the means of prosecuting the contest without material difficulty or danger, and with a reasonable prospect of completely attaining our object? I will not dwell on the improved state of public credit, on the continually increasing amount (in spite of extraordinary temporary burdens) of our permanent revenue, on the yearly accession of wealth to an extent unprecedented even in the most flourishing times of peace, which we are deriving in the midst of war, from our extended and flourishing commerce; on the progressive improvement and growth of our manufactures; on the proofs which we see on all sides of the uninterrupted accumulation of productive capital; and on the active exertion of every branch of national industry, which can tend to support and augment the population, the riches, and the power of the country.

As little need I recall the attention of the House to the additional means of action which we have derived from the great augmentation of our disposable military force, the continued triumphs of our powerful and victorious navy, and the events, which, in the course of the last two years, have raised the military ardour and military glory of the country to a height unexampled in any period of our history.

In addition to these grounds of reliance on our own strength and exertions, we have seen the consummate skill and valour of the arms of our allies proved by that series of unexampled success in the course of the last campaign, and we have every reason to expect a co-operation on the Continent, even to a greater extent, in the course of the present year. If we compare this view of our own situation with every thing we can observe of the state and condition of our enemy; if we can trace him labouring under equal difficulty in finding men to recruit his army, or money to pay it; if we know that in the course of the last year the most rigorous efforts of military conscription were scarcely sufficient to replace to the French armies at the end of the campaign, the numbers which they had lost in the course of it; if we have seen that that force, then in possession of advantages which it has since lost, was unable to contend with the efforts of the combined armies; if we know that, even while supported by the plunder of all the countries which they had over-run, those armies were reduced, by the confession of their commanders, to the extre-

many of distress, and destitute not only of the principal articles of military supply, but almost of the necessaries of life; if we see them now driven back within their own frontiers, and confined within a country whose own resources have long since been proclaimed by their successive Governments to be unequal either to paying or maintaining them; if we observe, that since the last revolution, no one substantial or effectual measure has been adopted to remedy the intolerable disorder of their finances, and to supply the deficiency of their credit and resources; if we see through large and populous districts of France, either open war levied against the present usurpation, or evident marks of disunion and distraction which the first occasion may call forth into a flame; if, I say, Sir, this comparison be just, I feel myself authorized to conclude from it, not that we are entitled to consider ourselves certain of ultimate success, not that we are to suppose ourselves exempted from the unforeseen vicissitudes of war; but that, considering the value of the object for which we are contending, the means for supporting the contest, and the probable course of human events, we should be inexcusable, if at this moment we were to relinquish the struggle on any grounds short of entire and complete security: that from perseverance in our efforts under such circumstances, we have the fairest reason to expect the full attainment of our object; but that at all events, even if we are disappointed in our more sanguine hopes, we are more likely to gain than to lose by the continuation of the contest; that every month to which it is continued, even if it should not in its effects lead to the final destruction of the Jacobin system, must tend so far to weaken and exhaust it, as to give us at least a greater comparative security in any termination of the war: that on all these grounds, this is not the moment at which it is consistent with our interest or our duty to listen to any proposals of negotiation with the present Ruler of France; but that we are not therefore pledged to any unalterable determination as to our future conduct; that in this we must be regulated by the course of events; and that it will be the duty of His Majesty's Ministers from time to time to adopt their measures to any variation of circumstances, to consider how far the effects of the military operations of the allies or of the internal disposition of France correspond with our present expectations; and, on a view of the whole, to compare the difficulties or risks which may arise in the prosecution of the contest, with the prospect of ultimate success, or of the degree of advantage to be derived from its farther continuance, and to be governed by the result of all these considerations, in the opinion and advice which they may offer to their Sovereign.

Mr. FOX then rose, and spoke as follows:—Mr. Speaker, at so late an hour of the night, I am sure you will do me the justice to believe that I do not mean to go at length into the discussion of this great question. Exhausted as the attention of the House must be, and unaccustomed as I have been of late to attend in my place, nothing but a deep sense of my duty could have induced me to trouble you at all, and particularly to request your indulgence at such an hour.

Sir, my honourable and learned friend (Mr. Erskine) has truly said, that the present is a new æra in the war. The right honourable gentleman opposite to me (Mr. Pitt) feels the justice of the remark; for by travelling back to the commencement of the war, and referring again to all the topics and arguments which he has so often and so successfully urged to the House, and by which he has drawn them on to the support of his measures, he is forced to acknowledge, that, at the end of a seven years conflict, we are come but to a new æra in the war, at which he thinks it necessary only to press all his former arguments to induce us to persevere. All the topics which have so often misled us—all the reasoning which has so invariably failed—all the lofty predictions which have so constantly been falsified by events—all the hopes which have amused the sanguine, and all the assurances of the distress and weakness of the enemy which have satisfied the unthinking, are again enumerated and advanced as arguments for our continuing the war. What! at the end of seven years of the most burthensome and the most calamitous struggle that ever this country was engaged in, are we again to be amused with notions of finance and calculations of the exhausted resources of the enemy, as a ground of confidence and of hope? Gracious God! Were we not told, five years ago, that France was not only on the brink and in the jaws of ruin, but that she was actually sunk into the gulph of bankruptcy?—When we were told, as an unanswerable argument against treating, “that she could not hold out another campaign—that nothing but peace could save her—that she wanted only time to recruit her exhausted finances—that to grant her repose, was to grant her the means of again molesting this country, and that we had nothing to do but persevere for a short time, in order to save ourselves for ever from the consequences of her ambition and her Jacobinism! What! after having gone on from year to year upon assurances like these, and after having seen the repeated refutations of every prediction, are we again to be gravely and seriously told, that we have the same prospect of success on the same identical grounds? And without any other argument

or security, are we invited, at this new era of the war, to carry on the war upon principles which, if adopted and acted upon, may make it eternal. — If the right honourable gentleman shall succeed in prevailing on Parliament, and the Country, to adopt the principles which he has advanced this night, I see no possible termination to the contest. No man can see an end to it; and upon the assurances and predictions which have so uniformly failed, we are called upon, not merely to refuse all negotiation, but to countenance principles and views as distant from wisdom and justice, as they are in their nature wild and impracticable.

I must lament, Sir, in common with every genuine friend of peace, the harsh and unconciliating language which Ministers have held to the French, and which they have even made use of in their answer to a respectful offer of a negotiation. Such language has ever been considered as extremely unwise, and has ever been reprobated by diplomatic men. I remember with pleasure the terms in which Lord Malmesbury at Paris, in the year 1796, replied to expressions of this sort, used by M. de la Croix. He justly said, "that offensive and injurious insinuations were only calculated to throw new obstacles in the way of accommodation, and that it was not by revolting reproaches, nor by reciprocal invective, that a sincere wish to accomplish the great work of pacification could be evinced." Nothing could be more proper nor more wise than this language; and such ought ever to be the tone and conduct of men entrusted with the very important task of treating with an hostile nation. Being a sincere friend to peace, I must say with Lord Malmesbury, that it is not by reproaches and by invective that we can hope for a reconciliation; and I am convinced, in my own mind, that I speak the sense of this House, and, if not of this House, certainly of a majority of the people of this country, when I lament that any unprovoked and unnecessary recriminations should be flung out, by which obstacles are put in the way of pacification. I believe that it is the prevailing sentiment of the people, that we ought to abstain from harsh and from insulting language; and in common with them I must lament, that both in the papers of Lord Grenville, and this night, such licence has been given to invective and reproach. For the same reason, I must lament, that the right honourable gentleman has thought proper to go at such length, and with such severity of minute investigation, into all the early circumstances of the war, which, whatever they were, are nothing to the present purposes, and ought not to influence the present feelings of the House. — I certainly shall not follow him into all the minute

detail, though I do not agree with him in many of his assertions. I do not know what impression his narrative may make on other gentlemen; but I will tell him, fairly and candidly, he has not convinced me. I continue to think, and until I see better grounds for changing my opinion than any that the right honourable gentleman has this night produced, I shall continue to think, and to say, plainly and explicitly, "that this country was the aggressor in the war." But with regard to Austria and Prussia—is there a man who, for one moment, can dispute that they were the aggressors? It will be vain for the right honourable gentleman to enter into long and plausible reasoning against the evidence of documents so clear, so decisive—so frequently, so thoroughly investigated. The unfortunate Monarch, Louis the Sixteenth, himself, as well as those who were in his confidence, have borne decisive testimony to the fact, that between him and the Emperor there was an intimate correspondence, and a perfect understanding. Do I mean by this that a positive treaty was entered into for the dismemberment of France? Certainly not; but no man can read the declarations which were made at Mantua, as well as at Pilnitz, as they are given by M. Bertrand de Molville, without acknowledging that this was not merely an intention, but a declaration of an intention, on the part of the great powers of Germany, to interfere in the internal affairs of France, for the purpose of regulating the Government, against the opinion of the people. This, though not a plan for the partition of France, was, in the eye of reason and common sense, an aggression against France. The right honourable gentleman denies that there was such a thing as a treaty of Pilnitz. Granted:—but was there not a declaration which amounted to an act of hostile aggression? The two powers, the Emperor of Germany and the King of Prussia, made a public declaration, that they were determined to employ their forces, in conjunction with those of the other Sovereigns of Europe, "to put the King of France in a situation to establish, in perfect liberty, the foundations of a Monarchical Government, equally agreeable to the rights of Sovereigns, and the welfare of the French." Whenever the other Princes should agree to co-operate with them, "then, and in that case, their Majesties were determined to act promptly, and by mutual consent, with the forces necessary to obtain the end proposed by all of them. In the mean time they declared, that they would give orders for their troops to be ready for actual service." Now, I would ask gentlemen to lay their hands upon their hearts, and say with candour, what the true and fair construction of this declaration was—whether it

was not a menace and an insult to France, since, in direct terms, it declared, that whenever the other powers should concur, they would attack France, then at peace with them, and then employed only in domestic and internal regulations? Let us suppose the case to be that of Great Britain—Will any gentleman say, that if two of the great powers should make a public declaration, that they were determined to make an attack on this kingdom as soon as circumstances should favour their intention; that they only waited for this occasion; and that in the mean time they would keep their forces ready for the purpose,—it would not be considered by the Parliament and People of this country as an hostile aggression? And is there any Englishman in existence, who is such a friend to peace as to say, that the nation could retain its honour and dignity if it should sit down under such a menace? I know too well what is due to the national character of England, to believe that there would be two opinions on the case, if thus put home to our own feelings and understanding. We must then respect in others the indignation which such an act would excite in ourselves; and when we see it established on the most indisputable testimony, that both at Pilnitz and at Mantua declarations were made to this effect, it is idle to say, that as far as the Emperor and the King of Prussia were concerned, they were not the aggressors in the war.

“Oh! but the decree of the 19th of November 1792,”—that, at least, the right honourable gentleman says, you must allow to be an act of aggression, not only against England, but against all the Sovereigns of Europe. I am not one of those, Sir, who attach much interest to the general and indiscriminate provocations thrown out at random, like this resolution of the 19th of November 1792. I do not think it necessary to the dignity of any people to notice and to apply to themselves menaces flung out without particular allusion, which are always unwise in the power which uses them, and which it is still more unwise to treat with seriousness. But if any such idle and general provocation to nations is given, either in insolence or in folly, by any Government, it is a clear first principle, that an explanation is the thing which a magnanimous nation, feeling itself aggrieved, ought to demand; and if an explanation be given which is not satisfactory, it ought clearly and distinctly to say so. There ought to be no ambiguity, no reserve, on the occasion. Now, we all know, from documents on our table, that M. Chauvelin did give an explanation of this silly decree. He declared, “in the name of his Government, that it was never meant that the French Government should favour insurrections; that the decree was appli-

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cable only to those people, who, after having acquired their liberty by conquest, should demand the assistance of the Republic; but that France would respect, not only the independence of England, but also that of her allies with whom she was not at war." This was the explanation given of the offensive decree: "But this explanation was not satisfactory." Did you say so to M. Chauvelin? Did you tell him that you were not content with this explanation? and when you dismissed him, afterwards, on the death of the King, did you say that this explanation was unsatisfactory?—No; you did no such thing: and I contend, that unless you demanded farther explanations, and they were refused, you have no right to urge the decree of the 19th of November as an act of aggression. In all your conferences and correspondence with M. Chauvelin, did you hold out to him what terms would satisfy you? Did you give the French the power or the means of settling the misunderstanding which that decree, or any other of the points at issue, had created? I contend, that when a nation refuses to state to another the thing which would satisfy her, she shews that she is not actuated by a desire to preserve peace between them; and I aver, that this was the case here. The Scheldt, for instance—you now say, that the navigation of the Scheldt was one of your causes of complaint. Did you explain yourself on that subject? Did you make it one of the grounds for the dismissal of M. Chauvelin? Sir, I repeat it; a nation, to justify itself in appealing to the last solemn resort, ought to prove that it had taken every possible means, consistent with dignity, to demand the reparation and redress which would be satisfactory; and if she refused to explain what would be satisfactory, she did not do her duty, nor exonerate herself from the charge of being the aggressor.

The right honourable gentleman has this night, for the first time, produced a most important paper—the instructions which were given to His Majesty's Minister at the Court of St. Petersburg, about the end of the year 1792, to interest Her Imperial Majesty to join her efforts with those of His Britannic Majesty, to prevent, by their joint mediation, the evils of a general war. Of this paper, and of the existence of any such document, I for one was entirely ignorant; but I have no hesitation in saying, that I completely approve of the instructions which appears to have been given; and I am sorry to see the right honourable gentleman disposed rather to take blame to himself than credit for having written it. He thinks that he shall be subject to the imputation of having been rather too slow to apprehend the dangers with which the French Revo-

lation was fraught, than that he was forward and hasty—" *Quod solum excusat, hoc solum miror in illo.*" I do not agree with him on the idea of censure. I by no means think that he was blameable for too much confidence in the good intentions of the French. I think the tenor and composition of this paper was excellent—the instructions conveyed in it wise; and that it wanted but one essential thing to have entitled it to general approbation—namely, to be acted upon. The clear nature and intent of that paper, I take to be, that our Ministers were to solicit the Court of Petersburg to join with them in a declaration to the French Government, stating explicitly what course of conduct, with respect to their foreign relations, they thought necessary to the general peace and security of Europe, and what, if complied with, would have induced them to mediate for that purpose—A proper, wise, and legitimate course of proceeding. Now, I ask you, Sir, whether, if this paper had been communicated to Paris at the end of the year 1792, instead of Petersburg, it would not have been productive of most seasonable benefits to mankind; and, by informing the French in time of the means by which they might have secured the mediation of Great Britain, have not only avoided the rupture with this country, but have also restored general peace to the Continent? The paper, Sir, was excellent in its intentions; but its merit was all in the composition. It was a fine theory, which Ministers did not think proper to carry into practice. It was very much like what the right honourable gentleman at the head of the Board of Controul (Mr. Dundas) said some years ago, of the commercial system upon which we have maintained our Government in the East Indies: "Nothing could be more moral, more beautiful, and benevolent, than the instructions which were sent out to our Governors; but unfortunately those instructions had been confined to the registers of the Corporation; they were to be found only in the minute-books of Leadenhall Street—their beneficial effects had never been felt by the people, for whose protection and happiness the theories were framed." In the same manner, this very commendable paper, so well digested, and so likely to preserve us from the calamities of war, was never communicated to the French; never acted upon, never known to the world until this day; nay, on the contrary, at the very time that Ministers had drawn up this paper, they were insulting M. Chauvelin, in every way, until about the 23d or 24th of January 1793, when they finally dismissed him, without stating any one ground upon which they were willing to preserve terms with the French.

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“But France,” it seems, “then declared war against us; and she was the aggressor, because the declaration came from her.”—Let us look at the circumstances of this transaction on both sides. Undoubtedly the declaration was made by them; but is a declaration the only thing which constitutes the commencement of a war? Do gentlemen recollect, that, in consequence of a dispute about the commencement of war, respecting the capture of a number of ships, an article was inserted in our treaty with France, by which it was positively stipulated, that in future, to prevent all disputes, the act of the dismissal of a Minister from either of the two Courts, should be held and considered as tantamount to a declaration of war? I mention this, Sir, because when we are idly employed in this retrospect of the origin of a war which has lasted so many years, instead of fixing our eyes only to the contemplation of the means of putting an end to it, we seem disposed to overlook every thing on our own parts, and to search only for grounds of imputation on the enemy. I almost think it an insult on the House to detain them with this sort of examination. Why, Sir, if France was the aggressor, as the right honourable gentleman says she was throughout—why did not Prussia call upon us for the stipulated number of troops, according to the article of the defensive treaty of alliance subsisting between us, by which, in case that either of the contracting parties was attacked, they had a right to demand the stipulated aid? and the same thing again may be asked when we were attacked. The right honourable gentleman might here accuse himself, indeed, of reserve; but it unfortunately happened, that at the time the point was too clear on which side the aggression lay. Prussia was too sensible that the war could not entitle her to make the demand, and that it was not a case within the scope of the defensive treaty. This is evidence worth a volume of subsequent reasoning; for if, at the time when all the facts were present to their minds, they could not take advantage of existing treaties, and that too when the Courts were on the most friendly terms with one another, it will be manifest to every thinking man that they were sensible they were not authorised to make the demand.

I really, Sir, cannot think it necessary to follow the right honourable gentleman into all the minute details which he has thought proper to give us respecting the first aggression; but that Austria and Prussia were the aggressors, not a man in any country, who has ever given himself the trouble to think at all on the subject, can doubt. Nothing could be more hostile than their whole proceedings. Did they not declare to France, that it was their internal concerns, not their external proceedings, which provoked them to

confederate against her. Look back to the proclamations with which they set out—Read the declarations which they made themselves, to justify their appeal to arms—They did not pretend to fear their ambition—their conquests—their troubling their neighbours ; but they accused them of new-modelling their own Government. They said nothing of their aggressions abroad ; they spoke only of their clubs and societies at Paris.

Sir, in all this, I am not justifying the French—I am not striving to absolve them from blame—either in their internal or external policy. I think, on the contrary, that their successive Rulers have been as bad and as execrable in various instances, as any of the most despotic and unprincipled Governments that the world ever saw. I think it impossible, Sir, that it should have been otherwise. It was not to be expected that the French, when once engaged in foreign wars, should not endeavour to spread destruction around them, and to form plans of aggrandizement and plunder on every side. Men bred in the school of the House of Bourbon could not be expected to act otherwise. They could not have lived so long under their antient masters, without imbibing the restless ambition, the perfidy, and the insatiable spirit of the race. They have imitated the practice of their great prototype, and, through their whole career of mischief and of crimes, have done no more than fervilely trace the steps of their own Louis XIV. If they have over-run countries, and ravaged them, they have done it upon Bourbon principles. If they have ruined and dethroned Sovereigns, it is entirely after the Bourbon manner.—If they have even fraternized with the people of foreign countries, and pretended to make their cause their own, they have only faithfully followed the Bourbon example. They have constantly had Louis, the grand Monarque, in their eye. But it may be said, that this example was long ago, and that we ought not to refer to a period so distant. True, it is a distant period applied to the man, but not so of the principle. The principle was never extinct ; nor has its operation been suspended in France, except, perhaps, for a short interval, during the administration of Cardinal Fleury ; and my complaint against the Republic of France is, not that she has generated new crimes—not that she has promulgated new mischief—but that she has adopted and acted upon the principles which have been so fatal to Europe, under the practice of the House of Bourbon. It is said, that wherever the French have gone, they have introduced Revolution—they have sought for the means of disturbing neighbouring States, and have not been content with mere conquest. What is this but adopting the ingenious scheme of Louis XIV ? He was not content

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with merely over-running a State;—whenever he came into a new territory, he established what he called his Chamber of Claims; a most convenient device, by which he inquired, whether the conquered country or province had any dormant or disputed claims—any cause of complaint—any unsettled demand upon any other State or Province—upon which he might wage war upon such State, thereby discover again ground for new devastation, and gratify his ambition by new acquisitions. What have the Republicans done more atrocious, more Jacobinical, than this? Louis went to war with Holland—His pretext was, that Holland had not treated him with sufficient respect;—a very just and proper cause for war indeed. This, Sir, leads me to an example which I think seasonable, and worthy the attention of His Majesty's Ministers. When our Charles II. as a short exception to the policy of his reign, made the triple alliance for the protection of Europe, and particularly of Holland, against the ambition of Louis XIV. what was the conduct of that great, virtuous, and most able Statesman, M. de Witt, when the confederates came to deliberate on the terms upon which they should treat with the French Monarch? When it was said that he had made unprincipled conquests, and that he ought to be forced to surrender them all, what was the language of that great and wise man? “No,” said he; “I think we ought not to look back to the origin of the war, so much as the means of putting an end to it. If you had united in time to prevent these conquests, well; but, now that he has made them, he stands upon the ground of conquest, and we must agree to treat with him, not with reference to the origin of the conquest, but with regard to his present posture. He has those places, and some of them we must be content to give up as the means of peace—for conquest will always successfully set up its claims to indemnification.” Such was the language of this Minister, who was the ornament of his time; and such, in my mind, ought to be the language of Statesmen, with regard to the French, at this day; and the same ought to have been said at the formation of the Confederacy. It was true that the French had over-run Savoy; but they had over-run it upon Bourbon principles; and having gained this and other conquests before the Confederacy was formed, they ought to have treated with her rather for future security, than for past correction. States in possession, whether Monarchical or Republican, will claim indemnity in proportion to their success; and it will never so much be inquired by what right they gained possession, as by what means they can be prevented from enlarging their depredations. Such is the safe practice of the world; and such ought to have been the conduct of the powers when the reduction

of Savoy made them coalesce. The right honourable gentleman may know more of the secret particulars of their over-running Savoy than I do; but certainly, as they have come to my knowledge, it was a most Bourbon-like act. A great and justly celebrated historian, whom I will not call a foreigner—I mean Mr. Hume (a writer, certainly, estimable in many particulars, but who is a childish lover of Princes)—talks of Louis XIV. in very magnificent terms; but he says of him, that, though he managed his enterprizes with skill and bravery, he was unfortunate in this, that he never got a good and fair pretence for war. This he reckons among his misfortunes! Can we say more of the Republican French? In seizing on Savoy, I think they made use of the words, “*convenances morales et physiques*.” These were her reasons. A most Bourbon-like phrase! And I therefore contend, that as we never scrupled to treat with the Princes of the House of Bourbon on account of their rapacity, their thirst of conquest, their violation of treaties, their perfidy, and their restless spirit; so, I contend, we ought not to refuse to treat with their Republican imitators.

Ministers could not pretend ignorance of the unprincipled manner in which the French had seized on Savoy. The Sardinian Minister complained of the aggression, and yet no stir was made about it. The Courts of Europe stood by, and saw the outrage; and our Ministers saw it. The right honourable gentleman will in vain, therefore, exert his powers to persuade me of the interest he takes in the preservation of the rights of nations, since, at the moment when an interference might have been made with effect, no step was taken, no remonstrance made, no mediation negotiated, to stop the career of conquest. All the pretended and hypocritical sensibility “for the rights of nations, and for social order,” with which we have since been stunned, cannot impose upon those who will take the trouble to look back to the period when this sensibility ought to have roused us into seasonable exertion. At that time, however, the right honourable gentleman makes it his boast, that he was prevented, by a sense of neutrality, from taking any measures of precaution on the subject. I do not give the right honourable gentleman much credit for his spirit of neutrality on the occasion. It flowed from the sense of the country at the time, the great majority of which was clearly and decidedly against all interruptions being given to the French in their desire of regulating their own internal Government.

But this neutrality, which respected only the internal rights of the French, and from which the people of England would never have departed but for the impolitic and hypocritical cant which was

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set up to arouse their jealousy and alarm their fears, was very different from the great principle of political prudence which ought to have actuated the Councils of the nation, on seeing the first steps of France towards a career of external conquest. My opinion is, that when the unfortunate King of France offered to us, in the letter delivered by M. Chauvelin and M. Talleyrand, and even intreated us to mediate between him and the allied powers of Austria and Prussia, they ought to have accepted of the offer, and exerted their influence to save Europe from the consequence of a system which was then beginning to manifest itself. It was, at least, a question of prudence; and as we had never refused to treat and to mediate with the old Princes on account of their ambition or their perfidy, we ought to have been equally ready now, when the same principles were acted upon by other men. I must doubt the sensibility which could be so cold and so indifferent at the proper moment for its activity. I fear that there were at that moment the germs of ambition rising in the mind of the right honourable gentleman, and that he was beginning, like others, to entertain hopes that something might be obtained out of the coming confusion. What but such a sentiment could have prevented him from overlooking the fair occasion that was offered for preventing the calamities with which Europe was threatened? What but some such interested principle could have made him forego the truly honourable task, by which his administration would have displayed its magnanimity and its power? But for some such feeling, would not this country, both in wisdom and in dignity, have interfered, and, in conjunction with the other powers, have said to France, "You ask for a mediation; we will mediate with candour and sincerity, but we will at the same time declare to you our apprehensions. We do not trust to your assertion of a determination to avoid all foreign conquest, and that you are desirous only of settling your own Constitution, because your language is contradicted by experience and the evidence of facts. You are Frenchmen, and you cannot so soon have forgotten and thrown off the Bourbon principles in which you were educated. You have already imitated the bad practice of your Princes; you have seized on Savoy without a colour of right.—But here we take our stand. Thus far you have gone, and we cannot help it; but you must go no farther. We will tell you distinctly what we shall consider as an attack on the balance and the security of Europe; and, as the condition of our interference, we will tell you also the securities that we think essential to the general repose." This ought to have been the language of His Majesty's Ministers when their mediation was

solicited; and something of this kind they evidently thought of when they sent the instructions to Peterburgh which they have mentioned this night, but upon which they never acted. Having not done so, I say, they have no right to talk now about the violated rights of Europe—about the aggression of the French—and about the origin of the war, in which this country was so suddenly afterwards plunged. Instead of this, what did they do? They hung back; they avoided explanation; they gave the French no means of satisfying them; and I repeat my proposition—when there is a question of peace and war between two nations, that Government feels itself in the wrong which refuses to state with clearness and precision what she should consider as a satisfaction and a pledge of peace.

Sir, if I understand the true precepts of the Christian religion, as set forth in the New Testament, I must be permitted to say, that there is no such thing as a rule or doctrine by which we are directed, or can be justified, in waging a war for religion. The idea is subversive of the very foundations upon which it stands, which are those of peace and good-will among men. Religion never was, and never can be, a justifiable cause of war; but it has been too often grossly used as the pretext and the apology for the most unprincipled wars.

I have already said, and I repeat it, that the conduct of the French to foreign nations cannot be justified. They have given great cause of offence, but certainly not to all countries alike. The right honourable gentlemen opposite to me have made an indiscriminate catalogue of all the countries which the French have offended, and, in their eagerness to throw odium on the nation, have taken no pains to investigate the sources of their several quarrels. I will not detain you, Sir, by entering into the long detail which has been given of their aggressions and their violences; but let me mention Sardinia as one instance which has been strongly insisted upon. Did the French attack Sardinia when at peace with them? No such thing. The King of Sardinia had accepted of a subsidy from Great Britain; and Sardinia was, to all intents and purposes, a belligerent power. Several other instances might be mentioned; but though, perhaps, in the majority of instances, the French may be unjustifiable, is this the moment for us to dwell upon these enormities—to waste our time, and inflame our passions, by criminating and recriminating upon each other? There is no end to such a war. I have somewhere read, I think in Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World, of a most bloody and fatal battle which was fought by two opposite armies, in which almost all the

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combatants on both sides were killed, "because," says the historian, "though they had offensive weapons on both sides, they had none for defence." So, in this war of words, if we are to use only offensive weapons—if we are to indulge only in invective and abuse, the contest must be eternal.

If this war of reproach and invective is to be countenanced, may not the French with equal reason complain of the outrages and the horrors committed by the powers opposed to them? If we must not treat with the French on account of the iniquity of their former transactions, ought we not to be as scrupulous of connecting ourselves with other powers equally criminal? Surely, Sir, if we must be thus rigid in scrutinizing the conduct of an enemy, we ought to be equally careful in not committing ourselves, our honour, and our safety, with an ally, who has manifested the same want of respect for the rights of other nations. Surely, if it is material to know the character of a power with whom you are about only to treat for peace; it is more material to know the character of allies, with whom you are about to enter into the closest connection of friendship, and for whose exertions you are about to pay. Now, Sir, what was the conduct of your own allies to Poland? Is there a single atrocity of the French, in Italy, in Switzerland, in Egypt if you please, more unprincipled and inhuman, than that of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, in Poland? What has there been in the conduct of the French to foreign powers; what in the violation of solemn treaties; what in the plunder, devastation, and dismemberment of unoffending countries; what in the horrors and murders perpetrated upon the subdued victims of their rage in any district which they have over-run, worse than the conduct of those three great powers, in the miserable, devoted, and trampled-on kingdom of Poland, and who have been, or are, our allies in this war for religion and social order, and the rights of nations? "Oh! but you *regretted* the partition of Poland!" Yes, *regretted*! you *regretted* the violence, and that is all you did. You united yourselves with the actors; you, in fact, by your acquiescence, confirmed the atrocity. But they are your allies; and though they over-run and divided Poland, there was nothing, perhaps, in the manner of doing it, which stamped it with peculiar infamy and disgrace. The hero of Poland, perhaps, was merciful and mild! He was "as much superior to Bonaparte in bravery, and in the discipline which he maintained, as he was superior in virtue and humanity!" He was animated by the purest principles of Christianity, and was restrained in his career by the benevolent precepts which it inculcates! Was he? Let unfortunate Warsaw,

and the miserable inhabitants of the suburb of Praga in particular, tell! What do we understand to have been the conduct of this magnanimous hero, with whom, it seems, Bonaparte is not to be compared? He entered the suburb of Praga, the most populous suburb of Warsaw; and there he let his soldiery loose on the miserable, unarmed and unresisting people. Men, women, and children, nay, infants at the breast, were doomed to one indiscriminate massacre! Thousands of them were inhumanly, wantonly butchered! And for what? Because they had dared to join in a wish to meliorate their own condition as a people, and to improve their Constitution, which had been confessed by their own Sovereign to be in want of amendment. And such is the hero upon whom the cause of religion and social order is to repose! And such is the man whom we praise for his discipline and his virtue, and whom we hold out as our boast and our dependence; while the conduct of Bonaparte unfits him to be even treated with as an enemy!

But the behaviour of the French towards Switzerland raises all the indignation of the right honourable gentleman, and inflames his eloquence. I admire the indignation which he expresses (and I think he felt it) in speaking of this country, so dear and so congenial to every man who loves the sacred name of Liberty. He who loves Liberty, says the right honourable gentleman, thought himself at home on the favoured and happy mountains of Switzerland, where she seemed to have taken up her abode under a sort of implied compact, among all other States, that she should not be disturbed in this her chosen asylum. I admire the eloquence of the right honourable gentleman in speaking of this country, of liberty and peace, to which every man would desire, once in his life at least, to make a pilgrimage! But who, let me ask him, first proposed to the Swiss people to depart from the neutrality, which was their chief protection, and to join the confederacy against the French? I aver, that a noble relation of mine (Lord Robert Fitzgerald), then the Minister of England to the Swiss Cantons, was instructed, in direct terms, to propose to the Swiss, by an official note, to break from the safe line they had laid down for themselves, and to tell them, "in such a contest neutrality was criminal."—I know that noble Lord too well, though I have not been in habits of intercourse with him of late, from the employments in which he has been engaged, to suspect that he would have presented such a paper without the express instructions of his Court, or that he would have gone beyond those instructions.

But was it only to Switzerland that this sort of language was held? What was our language also to Tuscany and to Genoa?

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An honourable gentleman (Mr. Canning) has denied the authenticity of a pretended letter which has been circulated, and ascribed to Lord Harvey. He says, it is all a fable and a forgery. Be it so; but is it also a fable that Lord Harvey did speak in terms to the Grand Duke, which he considered as offensive and insulting? I cannot tell, for I was not present; but was it not, and is it not believed? Is it a fable that Lord Harvey went into the closet of the Grand Duke, laid his watch upon the table, and demanded, in a peremptory manner, that he should, within a certain number of minutes, I think I have heard, within a quarter of an hour, determine, aye or no, to dismiss the French Minister, and order him out of his dominions; with the menace, that if he did not, the English fleet should bombard Leghorn? Will the honourable gentleman deny this also? I certainly do not know it from my own knowledge; but I know, that persons of the first credit, then at Florence, have stated these facts, and that they have never been contradicted. It is true, that upon the Grand Duke's complaint of this indignity, Lord Harvey was recalled; but was the principle recalled? was the mission recalled? Did not Ministers persist in the demand which Lord Harvey had made, perhaps ungraciously? and was not the Grand Duke forced, in consequence, to dismiss the French Minister? and did they not drive him to enter into an unwilling war with the Republic? It is true that he afterwards made his peace; and that, having done so, he was treated severely and unjustly by the French: but what do I conclude from all this, but that we have no right to be scrupulous, we who have violated the respect due to peaceable powers ourselves, in this war, which, more than any other that ever afflicted human nature, has been distinguished by the greatest number of disgusting and outrageous insults to the smaller powers by the great—And I infer from this also, that the instances not being confined to the French, but having been perpetrated by every one of the allies, and by England as much as by others, we have no right, either in personal character, or from our own deportment, to refuse to treat with the French on this ground.—Need I speak of your conduct to Genoa also? Perhaps the note delivered by Mr. Drake was also a forgery. Perhaps the blockade of the port never took place. It is impossible to deny the facts, which were so glaring at the time. It is a painful thing to me, Sir, to be obliged to go back to these unfortunate periods of the history of this war, and of the conduct of this country; but I am forced to the task by the use which has been made of the atrocities of the French as an argument against negotiation. I think I have said enough to prove, that if the French have been guilty, we

have not been innocent. Nothing but determined incredulity can make us deaf and blind to our own acts, when we are so ready to yield an assent to all the reproaches which are thrown out on the enemy, and upon which reproaches we are gravely told to continue the war.

"But the French," it seems, "have behaved ill every where. They seized on Venice, which had preserved the most exact neutrality, or rather" as it is hinted, "had manifested symptoms of friendship to them." I agree with the right honourable gentleman, it was an abominable act. I am not the apologist of, much less the advocate for their iniquities; neither will I countenance them in their pretences for the injustice. I do not think that much regard is to be paid to the charges which a triumphant soldiery bring on the conduct of a people whom they have over-run. Pretences for outrage will never be wanting to the strong, when they wish to trample on the weak; but when we accuse the French of having seized on Venice, after stipulating for its neutrality, and guaranteeing its independence, we should also remember the excuse that they made for the violence—namely, that their troops had been attacked and murdered. I say I am always incredulous about such excuses; but I think it fair to hear whatever can be alledged on the other side. We cannot take one side of a story only. Candour demands that we should examine the whole before we make up our minds on the guilt. I cannot think it quite fair to state the view of the subject of one party as indisputable fact, without even mentioning what the other party has to say for itself. But, Sir, is this all? Though the perfidy of the French to the Venetians be clear and palpable, was it worse in morals, in principle, and in example, than the conduct of Austria? My honourable friend (Mr. Whitbread) properly asked, "Is not the receiver as bad as the thief?" If the French seized on the territory of Venice, did not the Austrians agree to receive it? "But this," it seems, "is not the same thing." It is quite in the nature, and within the rule of diplomatic morality, for Austria to receive the country which was thus seized upon unjustly. "The Emperor took it as a compensation; it was his by barter; he was not answerable for the guilt by which it was obtained." What is this, Sir, but the false and abominable reasoning with which we have been so often disgusted on the subject of the slave trade? Just in the same manner have I heard a notorious wholesale dealer in this inhuman traffic, justify his abominable trade. "I am not guilty of the horrible crime of tearing that mother from her infants; that husband from his wife; of depopulating that village; of depriving that family of their sons,

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the support of their aged parents!—No; thank Heaven! I am not guilty of this horror; I only bought them in the fair way of trade. They were brought to the market; they had been guilty of crimes, or they had been made prisoners in war; they were accused of witchcraft, of obi, or of some other sort of forcery; and they were brought to me for sale; I gave a valuable consideration for them; but God forbid that I should have stained my soul with the guilt of dragging them from their friends and families!" Such has been the precious defence of the slave trade; and such is the argument set up for Austria, in this instance of Venice. "I did not commit the crime of trampling on the independence of Venice. I did not seize on the city; I gave a *quid pro quo*. It was a matter of barter and indemnity; I gave half a million of human beings to be put under the yoke of France in another district, and I had these people turned over to me in return!" This, Sir, is the defence of Austria; and under such detestable sophistry as this, is the infernal traffic in human flesh, whether in white or black, to be continued, and even justified! At no time has that diabolical traffic been carried to a greater length than during the present war; and that by England herself, as well as Austria and Russia.

"But France," it seems, "has roused all the nations of Europe against her;" and the long catalogue has been read to you, to prove that she must have been atrocious to provoke them all. Is it true, Sir, that she has roused them all? It does not say much for the address of His Majesty's Ministers, if this be the case. What, Sir! have all your negotiations, all your declamation, all your money, been squandered in vain? Have you not succeeded in stirring the indignation, and engaging the assistance, of a single power? But you do yourselves injustice. I dare say the truth lies between you—Between their crimes and your money the rage has been excited; and full as much is due to your seductions, as to her atrocities. My honourable and learned friend (Mr. Erskine) was correct, therefore, in his argument; for you cannot take both sides of the case: you cannot accuse them of having provoked all Europe, and at the same time claim the merit of having roused them to join you.

You talk of your allies. Sir, I wish to know who your allies are? Russia is one of them, I suppose. Did France attack Russia? Has the magnanimous Paul taken the field for social order and religion, on account of personal aggression? The Emperor of Russia has declared himself Grand Master of Malta, though his religion is as opposite to that of the Knights, as ours is; and he is as much considered an heretic by the church of Rome, as we are. The King of Great Britain might, with as much reason and propriety,

declare himself the head of the order of the Chartreuse Monks ; for he, as well as we, were considered as heretics by the Pope. Not content with taking to himself the commandery of this institution of Malta, Paul has even created a married man a knight, contrary to all the most sacred rules and regulations of the order. And yet this ally of ours is fighting for religion !—So much for his religion : Let us see his regard to social order ! How does he shew his abhorrence of the principles of the French, in their violation of the rights of other nations ? What has been his conduct to Denmark ? He says to Denmark—“ You have seditious clubs at Copenhagen—No Danish vessel shall enter the ports of Russia !” He holds a still more despotic language to Hamburgh. He threatens to lay an embargo on their trade ; and he forces them to surrender up men who are claimed by the French as their citizens—whether truly or not, I do not inquire. He threatens them with his own vengeance if they refuse, and subjects them to that of the French if they comply. And what has been his conduct to Spain ? He first sends away the Spanish minister from Petersburg, and then complains, as a great insult, that his minister was dismissed from Madrid !—This is one of our allies ; and he has declared that the object for which he has taken up arms, is to replace the antient race of the House of Bourbon on the Throne of France, and that he does this for the cause of religion and social order ! Such is the respect for religion and social order which he himself displays ; and such are the examples of it with which we coalesce !

No man regrets, Sir, more than I do, the enormities that France has committed ; but how do they bear upon the question as it now stands ? Are we for ever to deprive ourselves of the benefits of peace, because France has perpetrated acts of injustice ? Sir, we cannot acquit ourselves upon such ground. We have negotiated. With the knowledge of these acts of injustice and disorder, we have treated with them twice ; yet the right honourable gentleman cannot enter into negotiation with them now ; and it is worth while to attend to the reasons that he gives for refusing their offer. The Revolution itself is no more an objection now, than it was in the year 1796, when he did negotiate ; for the Government of France at that time was surely as unstable as it is now. The crimes of the French, the instability of their government, did not then prevent him ; and why are they to prevent him now ? He negotiated with a government as unstable, and, baffled in that negotiation, he did not scruple to open another at Lisle in the year 1797. We have heard a very curious account of these negotiations this day, and, as the right honourable gentleman has emphatically told us, an *honest* ac-

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count of them. He says he has no scruple in avowing that he apprehended danger from the success of his own efforts to procure a pacification, and that he was not displeased at its failure. He was sincere in his endeavours to treat, but he was not disappointed when they failed. I wish to understand the right honourable gentleman correctly—His declaration on the subject, then, I take to be this—that though sincere in his endeavours to procure peace in 1797, yet he apprehended greater danger from accomplishing his object, than from the continuance of war; and that he felt this apprehension from the comparative views of the probable state of peace and war at that time. I hope I state the right honourable gentleman correctly. I have no hesitation in allowing the fact, that a state of peace, immediately after a war of such violence, must, in some respects, be a state of insecurity; but does this not belong, in a certain degree, to all wars? And are we never to have peace, because that peace may be insecure? But there was something, it seems, so peculiar in this war, and in the character and principles of the enemy, that the right honourable gentleman thought a peace in 1797 would be comparatively more dangerous than war. Why then did he treat? I beg the attention of the House to this—He treated, “because the unequivocal sense of the people of England was declared to be in favour of a negotiation.” The right honourable gentleman confesses the truth, then, that in 1797 the people were for peace. I thought so at the time; but you all recollect, that when I stated it in my place, it was denied:—“True,” they said, “you have procured petitions; but we have petitions too—we all know in what strange ways petitions may be procured, and how little they deserve to be considered as the sense of the people.” This was their language at the time; but now we find these petitions did speak the sense of the people, and that it was, on this side of the House, only, the sense of the people was spoken: The majority spoke a contrary language! It is acknowledged then, that the unequivocal sense of the people of England may be spoken by the minority of this House, and that it is not always by the test of numbers that an honest decision is to be ascertained. This House decided against what the right honourable gentleman knew to be the sense of the country; but he himself acted upon that sense against the vote of Parliament.

The negotiation in 1796 went off, as my honourable and learned friend (Mr. Erskine) has said, upon the question of Belgium; or, as the right honourable gentleman asserts, upon a question of principle. He negotiated to please the people, but it went off “on account of a monstrous principle advanced by France, incompatible

with all negotiation." This is now said. Did the right honourable gentleman say so at the time? Did he fairly and candidly inform the people of England, that they broke off the negotiation because the French had urged a basis that it was totally impossible for England at any time to grant? No such thing. On the contrary, when the negotiation broke off, they published a manifesto, "renewing, in the face of Europe, the solemn declaration, that whenever the enemy should be disposed to enter on the work of a general pacification, in a spirit of conciliation and equity, nothing should be wanting on their part to contribute to the accomplishment of that great object."—And accordingly, in the year 1797, notwithstanding this incompatible principle, and with all the enormities of the French on their heads, they opened a new negotiation at Lisle. They do not wait for any retraction of this incompatible principle; they do not wait even till overtures shall be made to them; but they solicit and renew a negotiation themselves. I do not blame them for this, Sir; I say only that it is an argument against the assertion of an incompatible principle. It is a proof that they did not then think as the right honourable gentleman now says they thought; but that they yielded to the sentiments of the nation, who were generally inclined to peace, against their own judgment; and, from a motive which I shall come to by and by, they had no hesitation, on account of the first rupture, to renew the negotiation—it was renewed at Lisle; and this the French broke off, after the revolution at Paris on the 4th of September. What was the conduct of Ministers upon this occasion? One would have thought, that, with the fresh insult at Lisle in their minds, with the recollection of their failure the year before at Paris, if it had been true that they found an incompatible principle, they would have talked a warlike language, and would have announced to their country and to all Europe, that peace was not to be obtained; that they must throw away the scabbard, and think only of the means of continuing the contest—No such thing. They put forth a declaration, in which they said, that they should look with anxious expectation for the moment when the Government of France should shew a disposition and spirit corresponding with their own; and renewing before all Europe the solemn declaration, that at the very moment when the brilliant victory of Lord Duncan might have justified them to demand more extravagant terms, they were willing, if the calamities of war could be closed, to conclude peace on the same moderate and equitable principles and terms which they had before proposed. Such was their declaration upon that occasion; and in the discussions which we had upon it in this House, Ministers were explicit.

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They said, that by that negotiation, there had been given to the world what might be regarded as an unequivocal test of the sincerity and disposition of a government towards peace, or against it ; for those who refuse discussion, shew that they are disinclined to pacification ; and it is therefore, they said, always to be considered as a test, that the party who refuses to negotiate, is the party who is disinclined to peace. This they themselves set up as the test. Try them now, Sir, by that test. An offer is made them. They rashly, and I think rudely, refuse it. Have they, or have they not, broken their own test?

But, they say, " they have not refused all discussion." They have put a case. They have expressed a wish for the restoration of the House of Bourbon, and have declared that to be an event which would immediately remove every obstacle to negotiation. Sir, as to the restoration of the House of Bourbon, if it shall be the wish of the people of France, I for one shall be perfectly content to acquiesce. I think the people of France, as well as every other people, ought to have the Government which they like best themselves ; and the form of that Government, or the persons who hold it in their hands, should never be an obstacle with me to treat with the nation for peace, or to live with them in amity—But as an Englishman, Sir, and actuated by English feelings, I surely cannot wish for the restoration of the House of Bourbon to the Throne of France. I hope that I am not a man to bear heavily upon any unfortunate family. I feel for their situation—I respect their distresses—But as a friend of England, I cannot wish for their restoration to the power which they abused. I cannot forget that the whole history of the century is little more than an account of the wars and the calamities arising from the restless ambition, the intrigues, and the perfidy of the House of Bourbon.

I cannot discover, in any part of the laboured defence which has been set up for not accepting the offer now made by France, any argument to satisfy my mind that Ministers have not forfeited the test which they held out as infallible in 1797. An honourable gentleman (Mr. Canning) thinks that Parliament should be eager only to approach the Throne with declarations of their readiness and resolution to support His Majesty in the farther prosecution of the war without inquiry ; and he is quite delighted with an address, which he has found upon the Journals, to King William, in which they pledged themselves to support him in his efforts to resist the ambition of Louis XIV. He thinks it quite astonishing how much it is in point, and how perfectly it applies to the present occasion. One would have thought, Sir, that in order to prove the

application, he would have shewn that an offer had been respectfully made by the Grand Monarch to King William, to treat, which he had peremptorily, and in very irritating terms, refused; and that, upon this, the House of Commons had come forward, and, with one voice, declared their determination to stand by him, with their lives and fortunes, in prosecuting the just and necessary war. Not a word of all this; and yet the honourable gentleman finds it quite a parallel case, and an exact model for the House, on this day, to pursue. I really think, Sir, he might as well have taken any other address upon the Journals, upon any other topic, as this address to King William.—It would have been equally in point, and would have equally served to shew the honourable gentleman's talent for reasoning.

Sir, I cannot here overlook another instance of this honourable gentleman's candid stile of debating, and of his respect for Parliament. He has found out, it seems, that in former periods of our history, and even in periods which have been denominated good times, intercepted letters have been published; and he reads, from the Gazette, instances of such publication. Really, Sir, if the honourable gentleman had pursued the profession to which he turned his thoughts when younger, he would have learnt that it was necessary to find cases a little more in point. And yet, full of his triumph on this notable discovery, he has chosen to indulge himself in speaking of a most respectable and a most honourable person as any that this country knows, and who is possessed of as sound an understanding as any man that I have the good fortune to be acquainted with, in terms the most offensive and disgusting, on account of words which he may be supposed to have said in another place, [alluding to the Duke of Bedford's speech in the House of Lords.] He has spoken of that noble person, and of his intellect, in terms which, were I disposed to retort, I might say, shew himself to be possessed of an intellect which would justify me in passing over in silence any thing that comes from such a man. Sir, the noble person did not speak of the mere act of publishing the intercepted correspondence; and the honourable gentleman's reference to the Gazettes of former periods is, therefore, not in point. The noble Duke complained of the manner in which these intercepted letters had been published, not of the fact itself of their publication; for, in the introduction and notes to those letters, the *ribaldry* is such, that they are not screened from the execration of every honourable mind even by their extreme stupidity. The honourable gentleman says, that he must treat with indifference the intellect of a man who can ascribe the present scarcity of corn to the war. Sir,

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I think there is nothing either absurd or unjust in such an opinion. Does not the war, necessarily, by its magazines, and still more by its expeditions, increase consumption? But when we learn that corn is, at this very moment, sold in France for less than half the price which it bears here, is it not a fair thing to suppose, that, but for the war, and its prohibitions, a part of that grain would be brought to this country, on account of the high price which it would sell for, and that, consequently, our scarcity would be relieved from their abundance? I speak only upon report, of course; but I see that the prices quoted in the French markets is less, by one half, than the prices in England. There was nothing, therefore, very absurd in what fell from the noble person; and I would really advise the honourable gentleman, when he speaks of persons distinguished for every virtue, to be a little more guarded in his language. I see no reason why he and his friends should not leave, to persons in another place, holding the same opinions as themselves, the task of answering what may be thrown out there. Is not the phalanx sufficient? It is no great compliment to their talents, considering their number, that they cannot be left to the task of answering the few to whom they are opposed; but, perhaps, the honourable gentleman has too little to do in this House, and he is to be sent there himself. In truth, I see no reason why even he might not be sent, as well as some others who have been sent there. I do not mean to speak against them; but I really think that the honourable gentleman will find full employment for all his talents in answering the arguments which are urged in this House, without employing them in disparaging one of the finest understandings in this kingdom.

And now, Sir, to return to the subject of the negotiation in 1797. It is, in my mind, extremely material to attend to the account which the right honourable gentleman gives of his memorable negotiation of 1797, and of his motives for entering into it. In all questions of peace and war, he says, many circumstances must necessarily enter into the consideration; and that they are not to be decided upon the extremes. The determination must be made upon a balance and comparison of the evils or the advantages upon the one side and the other, and that one of the greatest considerations is that of finance. Now, in 1797, the right honourable gentleman confesses he found himself peculiarly embarrassed as to the resources for the war, if they were to be found in the old and usual way of the funding system. Now, though he thought, upon his balance and comparison of considerations, that the evils of war would be fewer than those of peace, yet they would only be so, pro-

vided that he could establish *a new and solid system of finance* in the place of the old and exhausted funding system: and to accomplish this, it was necessary to have the unanimous assent and approbation of the people. To procure this unanimity, he pretended to be a friend to negotiation, though he did not wish for the success of that negotiation, but hoped, only, that through that means he should bring the people to agree to his *new and solid system of finance*. I trust I state the right honourable gentleman fairly. I am sure that I mean to do so. With these views, then, what does he do? Knowing that, contrary to his declarations in this House, the opinion of the people of England was generally for peace, he enters into a negotiation, in which, as the world believed at the time, and even until this day, he completely failed—No such thing, Sir,—he completely succeeded—for his object was not to gain peace; it was to gain over the people of this country to a *new and a solid system of finance*—that is, to the raising a great part of the supplies within the year, to the triple assessment, and to the tax upon income! And how did he gain them over? By pretending to be a friend of peace, which he was not; and by opening a negotiation, which he secretly wished might not succeed! The right honourable gentleman says, that in all this he was honest and sincere: he negotiated fairly, and would have obtained the peace, if the French had shewn a disposition correspondent to his own; but he rejoiced that their conduct was such as to convince the people of England of the necessity of concurring with him in the views which he had, and in granting him the supply which he thought essential to their posture at the time. Sir, I will not say, that in all this he was not honest to his own purpose, and that he has not been honest in his declarations and confessions this night; but I cannot agree that he was honest to this House, or honest to the people of this country. To this House it was not honest to make them counteract the sense of the people, as he knew it to be expressed in the petitions upon the table;—nor was it honest to the country, to act in a disguise, and to pursue a secret purpose unknown to them, while affecting to take the road which they pointed out. I know not whether this may not be honesty in the political ethics of the right honourable gentleman, but I know that it would be called by a very different name in the common transactions of society, and in the rules of morality, established in private life. I know of nothing, in the history of this country, that it resembles, except, perhaps, one of the most profligate periods—the reign of Charles II., when the sale of Dunkirk might probably have been justified by the same pretence. He also declared war against France, and did it to cover a nego-

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tiation by which, in his difficulties, he was to gain a *solid system of finance*.

But, Sir, I meet the right honourable gentleman on his own ground. I say that you ought to treat on the same principle on which you treated in 1797, in order to gain the cordial co-operation of the people. We want "experience, and the evidence of facts." Can there be any evidence of facts equal to that of a frank, open, and candid negotiation? Let us see whether Bonaparte will display the same temper as his predecessors. If he shall do so, then you will confirm the people of England in their opinion of the necessity of continuing the war, and you will revive all the vigour which you roused in 1797. Or will you not do this until you have a reverse of fortune? Will you never treat but when you are in a situation of distress, and when you have occasion to impose on the people?

But, you say, "you have not refused to treat." You have stated a case in which you will be ready immediately to enter into a negotiation, viz. the restoration of the House of Bourbon; but you deny that this is a *sine qua non*; and in your nonsensical language, which I do not understand, you talk of *limited possibilities*, which may induce you to treat without the restoration of the House of Bourbon. But do you state what they are? Now, Sir, I say, that if you put one case, upon which you declare that you are willing to treat immediately, and say that there are other possible cases which may induce you to treat hereafter, without mentioning what these possible cases are, you do state a *sine qua non* of immediate treaty. Suppose that I have an estate to sell, and I say my demand is 1000l. for it—I will sell the estate immediately for that sum. To be sure, there may be other terms upon which I may be willing to part with it; but I say nothing of them. The 1000l. is the only condition that I state now. Will any gentleman say, that I do not make the 1000l. the *sine qua non* of the immediate sale? Thus, you say, the restoration of the Princes is not the only possible ground; but you give no other. This is your *projet*. Do you demand a *contre-projet*? Do you follow your own rule? Do you not do the thing of which you complained in the enemy? You seemed to be afraid of receiving another proposition; and by confining yourselves to this one point, you make it, in fact, though not in terms, your *sine qua non*.

But the right honourable gentleman, in his speech, does what the official note avoids—He finds there the convenient words, "experience and the evidence of facts;"—upon these he goes into detail; and in order to convince the House that new evidence is

required; he goes back to all the earliest acts and crimes of the Revolution—to all the atrocities of all the governments that have passed away; and he contends that he must have experience that these foul crimes are repented of, and that a purer and a better system is adopted in France, by which he may be sure that they shall be capable of maintaining the relations of peace and amity. Sir, these are not conciliatory words; nor is this a practicable ground to gain experience. Does he think it possible, that evidence of a peaceable demeanour can be obtained in war?—What does he mean to say to the French Consul? “Until you shall, in war, behave yourself in a peaceable manner, I will not treat with you.”—Is there not something extremely ridiculous in this? In duels, indeed, we have often heard of this kind of language. Two gentlemen go out, and fight: when, after discharging their pistols at one another, it is not an unusual thing for one of them to say to the other—“Now I am satisfied—I see that you are a man of honour, and we are friends again.” There is something, by the by, ridiculous even in this; but, between nations, it is more than ridiculous—it is criminal. It is a ground which no principle can justify, and which is as impracticable as it is impious. That two nations should be set on to beat one another into friendship, is too abominable even for the fiction of romance; but for a Statesman, seriously and gravely, to lay it down as a system upon which he means to act, is monstrous. What can we say of such a test as he means to put the French Government to, but that it is hopeless? It is in the nature of war, to inflame animosity—to exasperate, not to soothe—to widen, not to approximate.—And so long as this is to be acted upon, I say, it is vain to hope that we can have the evidence which we require.

The right honourable gentleman, however, thinks otherwise; and he points out four distinct possible cases, besides the re-establishment of the Bourbon family, in which he would agree to treat with the French.

1. “If Bonaparte shall conduct himself so as to convince him that he has abandoned the principles which were objectionable in his predecessors, and that he shall be actuated by a more moderate system.” I ask you, Sir, if this is likely to be ascertained in war? It is the nature of war, not to allay, but to inflame the passions; and it is not by the invective and abuse which have been thrown upon him and his government, nor by the continued irritations which war is sure to give, that the virtues of moderation and forbearance are to be nourished.

2. “If, contrary to the expectations of Ministers, the people

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of France shall shew a disposition to acquiesce in the Government of Bonaparte." Does the right honourable gentleman mean to say, that because it is an usurpation on the part of the present Chief, that therefore the people are not likely to acquiesce in it? I have not time, Sir, to discuss the question of this usurpation, or whether it is likely to be permanent; but I certainly have not so good an opinion of the French, or of any people, as to believe that it will be short-lived, *merely* because it was an usurpation, and because it is a system of military despotism. Cromwell was an usurper; and in many points there may be found a resemblance between him and the present Chief Consul of France. There is no doubt but that, on several occasions of his life, Cromwell's sincerity may be questioned, particularly in his self-denying ordinance—in his affected piety, and other things; but would it not have been insanity in France and Spain to refuse to treat with him, because he was an usurper?—No, Sir, these are not the maxims by which governments are actuated. They do not inquire so much into the means by which power may have been acquired, as into the fact of where the power resides. The people did acquiesce in the government of Cromwell: but it may be said that the splendour of his talents, the vigour of his administration, the high tone with which he spoke to foreign nations, the success of his arms, and the character which he gave to the English name, induced the nation to acquiesce in his usurpation; and that we must not try Bonaparte by this example. Will it be said that Bonaparte is not a man of great abilities? Will it be said that he has not, by his victories, thrown a splendour over even the violence of the Revolution, and that he does not conciliate the French people by the high and lofty tone in which he speaks to foreign nations? Are not the French, then, as likely, as the English in the case of Cromwell, to acquiesce in his government? If they should do so, the right honourable gentleman may find that this possible predicament may fail him. He may find, that though one power may make war, it requires two to make peace. He may find that Bonaparte was as insincere as himself, in the proposition which he made; and in his turn he may come forward and say—"I have no occasion now for concealment. It is true, that in the beginning of the year 1800, I offered to treat, not because I wished for peace, but because the people of France wished for it; and besides, my old resources being exhausted, and there being no means of carrying on the war without a new and solid system of finance, I pretended to treat, because I wished to procure the unanimous assent of the French people to this *new and solid system of finance*. Did you think I was in earnest? You were

deceived. I now throw off the mask: I have gained my point; and I reject your offers with scorn." Is it not a very possible case that he may use this language? Is it not within the right honourable gentleman's *knowledge of human nature*? But even if this should not be the case, will not the very test which you require—the acquiescence of the people of France in his Government—give him an advantage-ground in the negotiation which he does not possess now? Is it quite sure, that when he finds himself safe in his seat, he will treat on the same terms as now, and that you will get a better peace some time hence, than you might reasonably hope to obtain at this moment? Will he not have one interest less than at present? and do you not overlook a favourable occasion, for a chance which is extremely doubtful? These are the considerations which I would urge to His Majesty's Ministers, against the dangerous experiment of waiting for the acquiescence of the people of France.

3. "If the allies of this country shall be less successful than they have every reason to expect they will be, in stirring up the people of France against Bonaparte, and in the farther prosecution of the war." And,

4. "If the pressure of the war should be heavier upon us, than it would be convenient for us to continue to bear."—These are the other two possible emergencies in which the right honourable gentleman would treat even with Bonaparte. Sir, I have often blamed the right honourable gentleman for being disingenuous and insincere. On the present occasion I certainly cannot charge him with any such thing. He has made to-night a most honest confession; he is open and candid. He tells Bonaparte fairly what he has to expect. "I mean," says he, "to do every thing in my power to raise up the people of France against you—I have engaged a number of allies, and our combined efforts shall be used to excite insurrection and civil war in France—I will strive to murder you, or to get you sent away. If I succeed, well; but if I fail, then I will treat with you. My resources being exhausted; even my solid system of finance having failed to supply me with the means of keeping together my allies, and of feeding the discontents I have excited in France—then you may expect to see me renounce my high tone—my attachment to the House of Bourbon—my abhorrence of your crimes—my alarm at your principles; for then I shall be ready to own, that, on the balance and comparison of circumstances, there will be less danger in concluding a peace, than in the continuance of war!" Is this a political language for one state to hold to another? And what sort of peace does the right honourable gentle-

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man expect to receive in that case? Does he think that Bonaparte would grant, to baffled insolence—to humiliated pride—to disappointment and to imbecility, the same terms which he would be ready to give now? The right honourable gentleman cannot have forgot what he said on another occasion,

“ ————— Potuit quæ plurima virtus

“ Esse fuit, toto certatum est corpore regni.”

He would then have to repeat his words; but with a different application—He would have to say, that all our efforts are vain—we have exhausted our strength—our designs are impracticable—and we must sue to you for peace.

Sir, what is the question to-night? We are called upon to support Ministers in refusing a frank, candid and respectful offer of negotiation, and to countenance them in continuing the war. Now, I would put the question in another way. Suppose that Ministers had been inclined to adopt the line of conduct which they pursued in 1796 and 1797, and that to-night, instead of a question on a war address, it had been an address to His Majesty, to thank him for accepting the overture, and for opening a negotiation to treat for peace: I ask the gentlemen opposite—I appeal to the whole 558 representatives of the people—to lay their hands upon their hearts, and to say, whether they would not have cordially voted for such an address? Would they, or would they not? Yes, Sir, if the address had breathed a spirit of peace, your benches would have resounded with rejoicings, and with praises of a measure that was likely to bring back the blessings of tranquillity. On the present occasion, then, I ask for the vote of no gentlemen, but of those who, in the secret confession of their conscience, admit, at this instant, while they hear me, that they would have cheerfully and heartily voted with the Minister for an address directly the reverse of this. If any such gentleman should vote with me, I should be this night in the greatest majority that ever I had the honour to vote with in this House. I do not know that the right honourable gentleman would find, even on the benches around him, a single individual who would not vote with me—I am sure he would not find many—I do not know that in this House I could single out the individual, who would think himself bound by consistency to vote against the right honourable gentleman, on an address for negotiation. There may be some, but they are very few. I do know, indeed, one most honourable man in another place (whose purity and integrity I respect, though I lament the opinion he has formed on this subject), who would think himself bound, from

the uniform consistency of his life, to vote against an address for negotiation. Earl Fitzwilliam would, I verily believe, do so. He would feel himself bound, from the previous votes he has given, to declare his objection to all treaty: but I own I do not know more in either House of Parliament—there may be others, but I do not know them. Why then, what is the House of Commons come to, when, notwithstanding their support given to the right honourable gentleman in 1796 and 1797, on his entering into negotiation; notwithstanding their inward conviction, that they would vote with him now for the same measure—what are we to think of the character of that House of Commons, who, after supporting the Minister in his negotiation for a solid system of finance, can now bring themselves to countenance his abandonment of the ground he took, and to support him in refusing all negotiation! What will be said of gentlemen who shall vote in this way, and yet feel, in their consciences, that they would have, with infinitely more readiness, voted the other?

Sir, we have heard to-night a great many most acrimonious invectives against Bonaparte, against all the course of his conduct, and against the unprincipled manner in which he seized upon the reins of government. I will not make his defence—I think all this sort of invective, which is used only to inflame the passions of this House and of the country, exceedingly ill-timed, and very impolitic—but I say I will not make his defence. I am not sufficiently in possession of materials upon which to form an opinion on the character and conduct of this extraordinary man. On his arrival in France, he found the Government in a very unsettled state, and the whole affairs of the Republic deranged, crippled, and involved. He thought it necessary to reform the Government; and he did reform it, just in the way in which a military man may be expected to carry on a reform—he seized on the whole authority to himself. It will not be expected from me, that I should either approve or apologize for such an act. I am certainly not for reforming governments by such expedients; but how this House can be so violently indignant at the idea of military despotism, is, I own, a little singular, when I see the composure with which they can observe it nearer home; nay, when I see them regard it as a frame of government most peculiarly suited to the exercise of free opinion, on a subject the most important of any that can engage the attention of a people. Was it not the system which was so happily and so advantageously established of late, all over Ireland; and which, even now, the Government may, at its pleasure, proclaim over the whole of that kingdom? Are not the persons

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and property of the people left, in many districts, at this moment, to the entire will of military commanders? and is not this held out as peculiarly proper and advantageous, at a time when the people of Ireland are freely, and with unbiassed judgments, to discuss the most interesting question of a Legislative Union? Notwithstanding the existence of martial law, so far do we think Ireland from being enslaved, that we think it precisely the period and the circumstances under which she may best declare her free opinion! Now, really, Sir, I cannot think that gentlemen, who talk in this way about Ireland, can, with a good grace, rail at military despotism in France.

But, it seems, "Bonaparte has broken his oaths. He has violated his oath of fidelity to the Constitution of the year 3." Sir, I am not one of those who think that any such oaths ought ever to be exacted. They are seldom or ever of any effect; and I am not for sporting with a thing so sacred as an oath. I think it would be good to lay aside all such oaths. Who ever heard, that, in revolutions, the oath of fidelity to the former Government was ever regarded; or, even when violated, that it was imputed to the persons as a crime? In times of revolution, men who take up arms are called rebels—If they fail, they are adjudged to be traitors. But who, before, ever heard of their being perjured? On the restoration of King Charles II, those who had taken up arms for the Commonwealth, were stigmatized as rebels and traitors, but not as men foresworn. Was the Earl of Devonshire charged with being perjured, on account of the allegiance he had sworn to the House of Stuart, and the part he took in those struggles which preceded and brought about the Revolution? The violation of oaths of allegiance was never imputed to the people of England, and will never be imputed to any people. But who brings up the question of oaths? He who strives to make twenty-four millions of persons violate the oaths they have taken to their present Constitution, and who desires to re-establish the House of Bourbon by such violation of their vows. I put it so, Sir; because, if the question of oaths be of the least consequence, it is equal on both sides. He who desires the whole people of France to perjure themselves, and who hopes for success in his project only upon their doing so, surely cannot make it a charge against Bonaparte that he has done the same.

"Ah! but Bonaparte has declared it as his opinion, that the "two Governments of Great Britain and of France cannot exist "together. After the treaty of Campo Formio, he sent two confidential persons, Berthier and Monge, to the Directory, to say so "in his name." Well, and what is there in this absurd and puerile assertion, if it was ever made? Has not the right honourable gen-

tleman, in this House, said the same thing? In this, at least, they resemble one another. They have both made use of this assertion; and I believe, that these two illustrious persons are the only two on earth who think it. But let us turn the tables. We ought to put ourselves at times in the place of the enemy, if we are desirous of really examining with candour and fairness the dispute between us. How may they not interpret the speeches of Ministers, and their friends, in both Houses of the British Parliament? If we are to be told of the idle speech of Berthier and Monge, may they not also bring up speeches, in which it has not been merely hinted, but broadly asserted, that "the two Constitutions of England and France could not exist together?" May not these offences and charges be reciprocated without end? Are we ever to go on in this miserable squabble about words? Are we still, as we happen to be successful on the one side or other, to bring up these impotent accusations, insults, and provocations, against each other; and only when we are beaten and unfortunate, to think of treating? Oh! pity the condition of man, gracious God! and save us from such a system of malevolence, in which all our old and venerated prejudices are to be done away, and by which we are to be taught to consider war as the natural state of man, and peace but as a dangerous and difficult extremity!

Sir, this temper must be corrected. It is a diabolical spirit, and would lead to an interminable war. Our history is full of instances, that where we have overlooked a proffered occasion to treat, we have uniformly suffered by delay. At what time did we ever profit by obstinately persevering in war? We accepted at Ryswick the terms we had refused five years before, and the same peace which was concluded at Utrecht might have been obtained at Gertruydenberg. And as to security, from the future machinations or ambition of the French, I ask you, what security you ever had, or could have? Did the different treaties made with Louis XIV. serve to tie up his hands—to restrain his ambition, or to stifle his restless spirit? At what time, in old or in recent periods, could you safely repose on the honour, forbearance and moderation of the French Government? Was there ever an idea of refusing to treat, because the peace might be afterwards insecure? The peace of 1763 was not accompanied with securities; and it was no sooner made, than the French Court began, as usual, its intrigues. And what security did the right honourable gentleman exact at the peace of 1783, in which he was engaged? Were we rendered secure by that peace? The right honourable gentleman knows well, that soon after that peace, the French formed a plan, in conjunction with the Dutch, of attacking

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our India possessions, of raising up the native powers against us, and of driving us out of India ; as the French were desirous of doing now—only with this difference, that the Cabinet of France entered into this project in a moment of profound peace, and when they conceived us to be lulled into a perfect security. After making the peace of 1783, the right honourable gentleman and his friends went out, and I, among others, came into office. Suppose, Sir, that we had taken up the jealousy upon which the right honourable gentleman now acts, and had refused to ratify the peace which he had made—Suppose that we had said—No ; France is acting a perfidious part—we see no security for England in this treaty—they want only a respite, in order to attack us again in an important part of our dominions ; and we ought not to confirm the treaty. I ask you—would the right honourable gentleman have supported us in this refusal ? I say, that upon his present reasoning he ought ; but I put it fairly to him, would he have supported us in refusing to ratify the treaty upon such a pretence ? He certainly ought not, and I am sure he would not ; but the course of reasoning which he now assumes, would have justified his taking such a ground. On the contrary, I am persuaded that he would have said—“ This is a refinement upon jealousy.—Security ! You have security, the only security that you can ever expect to get. It is the present interest of France to make peace. She will keep it if it be her interest—She will break it if it be her interest. Such is the state of nations ; and you have nothing but your own vigilance for your security.”

“ It is not the interest of Bonaparte, it seems, sincerely to enter “ into a negotiation, or, if he should even make peace, sincerely to “ keep it.” But how are we to decide upon his sincerity ? By refusing to treat with him ? Surely, if we mean to discover his sincerity, we ought to hear the propositions which he desires to make. “ But peace would be unfriendly to his system of military despotism.” Sir, I hear a great deal about the short-lived nature of military despotism. I wish the history of the world would bear gentlemen out in this description of military despotism. Was not the Government erected by Augustus Cæsar a military despotism ? And yet it endured for 600 or 700 years. Military despotism, unfortunately, is too likely in its nature to be permanent, and it is not true that it depends on the life of the first usurper. Though half of the Roman Emperors were murdered, yet the military despotism went on ; and so it would be, I fear, in France. If Bonaparte should disappear from the scene, to make room, perhaps, for a Berthier, or any other General, what difference would that make in the quality of French despotism, or in our relation to the country ?

We may as safely treat with a Bonaparte, or with any of his successors, be they whom they may, as we could with a Louis XVI. a Louis XVII. or a Louis XVIII.—There is no difference but in the name. Where the power essentially resides, thither we ought to go for peace.

But, Sir, if we are to reason on the fact, I should think that it is the interest of Bonaparte to make peace. A lover of military glory, as that General must necessarily be, may he not think that his measure of glory is full—that it may be tarnished by a reverse of fortune, and can hardly be increased by any new laurels? He must feel, that, in the situation to which he is now raised, he can no longer depend on his own fortune, his own genius, and his own talents, for a continuance of his success; he must be under the necessity of employing other Generals, whose misconduct or incapacity might endanger his power, or whose triumphs even might affect the interest which he holds in the opinion of the French. Peace, then, would secure to him what he has achieved, and fix the inconstancy of fortune. But this will not be his only motive. He must see that France also requires a respite—a breathing interval, to recruit her wasted strength. To procure her this respite, would be, perhaps, the attainment of more solid glory, as well as the means of acquiring more solid power, than any thing which he can hope to gain from arms, and from the proudest triumphs. May he not then be zealous to gain this fame, the only species of fame, perhaps, that is worth acquiring? Nay, granting that his soul may still burn with the thirst of military exploits, is it not likely that he is disposed to yield to the feelings of the French people, and to consolidate his power by consulting their interests? I have a right to argue in this way, when suppositions of his insincerity are reasoned upon on the other side. Sir, these aspersions are in truth always idle, and even mischievous. I have been too long accustomed to hear imputations and calumnies thrown out upon great and honourable characters, to be much influenced by them. My honourable and learned friend (Mr. Erskine) has paid this night a most just, deserved and honourable tribute of applause, to the memory of that great and unparalleled character, who is so recently lost to the world. I must, like him, beg leave to dwell a moment on the venerable George Washington, though I know that it is impossible for me to bestow any thing like adequate praise on a character which gave us, more than any other human being, the example of a perfect man; yet, good, great and unexampled as General Washington was, I can remember the time when he was not better spoken of in this House than Bonaparte is now. The right honourable gentleman

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who opened this debate (Mr. Dundas) may remember in what terms of disdain, of virulence, even of contempt, General Washington was spoken of by gentlemen on that side of the House. Does he not recollect with what marks of indignation any Member was stigmatized as an enemy to his country, who mentioned with common respect the name of General Washington? If a negotiation had then been proposed to be opened with that great man, what would have been said? Would you treat with a Rebel, a Traitor! What an example would you not give by such an act! I do not know whether the right honourable gentleman may not yet possess some of his old prejudices on the subject. I hope not: I hope by this time we are all convinced that a Republican Government, like that of America, may exist without danger or injury to social order, or to established Monarchies. They have happily shewn that they can maintain the relations of peace and amity with other States: they have shewn, too, that they are alive to the feelings of honour; but they do not lose sight of plain good sense and discretion. They have not refused to negotiate with the French, and they have accordingly the hopes of a speedy termination of every difference. We cry up their conduct, but we do not imitate it. At the beginning of the struggle, we were told that the French were setting up a set of wild and impracticable theories, and that we ought not to be misled by them—we could not grapple with theories. Now we are told that we must not treat, because, out of the Lottery, Bonaparte has drawn such a prize as military despotism. Is military despotism a theory? One would think that that is one of the practical things which Ministers might understand, and to which they would have no particular objection. But what is our present conduct founded on but a theory, and that a most wild and ridiculous theory? What are we fighting for? Not for a principle; not for security; not for conquest even; but merely for an experiment and a speculation, to discover whether a gentleman at Paris may not turn out a better man than we now take him to be.

My honourable friend (Mr. Whitbread) has been censured for an opinion which he gave, and I think justly, that the change of property in France since the Revolution must form an almost insurmountable barrier to the return of the ancient proprietors. "No such thing," says the right honourable gentleman; "nothing can be more easy. Property is depreciated to such a rate, that the purchasers would easily be brought to restore the estates." I very much differ with him in this idea. It is the character of every such convulsion as that which has ravaged France, that an infinite and undescribable load of misery is inflicted upon private families.

The heart sickens at the recital of the sorrows which it engenders.—No revolution implied, though it may have occasioned, a total change of property—The restoration of the Bourbons does imply it ; and there is the difference. There is no doubt but that if the noble families had foreseen the duration and the extent of the evils which were to fall upon their heads, they would have taken a very different line of conduct. But they unfortunately flew from their country. The King and his advisers sought foreign aid. A confederacy was formed to restore them by military force ; and as a means of resisting this combination, the estates of the fugitives were confiscated and sold. However compassion may deplore the case, it cannot be said that the thing is unprecedented. The people have always resorted to such means of defence. Now the question is, how this property is to be got out of their hands ? If it be true, as I have heard it said, the purchasers of national and forfeited estates amount to 1,500,000 persons—I say, if this be so, I see no hopes of their being forced to deliver up their property ; nor do I even know that they ought. I do not know whether it would be the means of restoring tranquillity and order to a country, to attempt to divest a body of one million and a half of inhabitants, in order to reinstate a much smaller body. I question the policy, even if the thing were practicable ; but I assert, that such a body of new proprietors forms an insurmountable barrier to the restoration of the antient order of things. Never was a revolution consolidated by a pledge so strong.

But, as if this were not of itself sufficient, Louis XVIII. from his retirement at Mittau, puts forth a manifesto, in which he assures the friends of his house, that he is about to come back with all the powers that formerly belonged to his family. He does not promise to the people a Constitution which might tend to conciliate their hearts ; but, stating, that he is to come with all the *ancien regime*, they would naturally attach to it its proper appendages of Bastiles, Lettres de Cachet, Gabelle, &c. And the Noblesse, for whom this proclamation was peculiarly conceived, would also naturally feel, that if the Monarch was to be restored to all his privileges, they surely were to be reinstated in their estates without a compensation to the purchasers. Is this likely to make the people wish for the restoration of royalty ? I have no doubt but there may be a number of Chouans in France, though I am persuaded that little dependence is to be placed on their efforts. There may be a number of people dispersed over France, and particularly in certain provinces, who may retain a degree of attachment to royalty : and how the Government will contrive to compromise with

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that spirit, I know not. I suspect, however, that Bonaparte will try: his efforts have been turned to that object; and, if we may believe report, he has succeeded to a considerable degree. He will naturally call to his recollection the precedent which the history of France itself will furnish. The once formidable insurrection of the Hugonots was completely stifled, and the party conciliated, by the policy of Henry IV. who gave them such privileges, and raised them so high in the Government, as to make some persons apprehend danger therefrom to the unity of the empire. Nor will the French be likely to forget the revocation of the edict—one of the memorable acts of the House of Bourbon—an act which was never surpassed in atrocity, injustice, and impolicy, by any thing that has disgraced Jacobinism. If Bonaparte shall attempt some similar arrangement to that of Henry IV. with the Chouans, who will say that he is likely to fail? He will meet with no great obstacle to success from the influence which our Ministers have established with the Chiefs, or in the attachment and dependence which they have on our protection; for what has the right honourable gentleman told him, in stating the contingencies in which he will treat with Bonaparte? He will excite a rebellion in France—He will give support to the Chouans, if they can stand their ground; but he will not make common cause with them: for unless they can depose Bonaparte, send him into banishment, or execute him, he will abandon the Chouans, and treat with this very man, whom, at the same time, he describes as holding the reins and wielding the powers of France for purposes of unexampled barbarity.

Sir, I with the atrocities of which we hear so much, and which I abhor as much as any man, were, indeed, unexampled. I fear that they do not belong exclusively to the French. When the right honourable gentleman speaks of the extraordinary successes of the last campaign, he does not mention the horrors by which some of these successes were accompanied. Naples, for instance, has been, among others, what is called *delivered*; and yet, if I am rightly informed, it has been stained and polluted by murders so ferocious, and by cruelties of every kind so abhorrent, that the heart shudders at the recital. It has been said, not only that the miserable victims of the rage and brutality of the fanatics were savagely murdered, but that, in many instances, their flesh was eaten and devoured by the Cannibals, who are the advocates and the instruments of social order! Nay, England is not totally exempt from reproach, if the rumours which are circulated be true. I will mention a fact, to give Ministers the opportunity, if it be false, to wipe away the stain that it must otherwise affix on the British name. It is said, that a

party of the Republican inhabitants of Naples took shelter in the fortrefs of the Castel de Uova. They were besieged by a detachment from the royal army, to whom they refused to surrender; but demanded that a British officer should be brought forward, and to him they capitulated. They made terms with him under the sanction of the British name. It was agreed, that their persons and property should be safe, and that they should be conveyed to Toulon. They were accordingly put on board a vessel; but before they sailed, their property was confiscated, numbers of them taken out, thrown into dungeons, and some of them, I understand, notwithstanding the British guarantee, actually executed!

Where then, Sir, is this war, which on every side is pregnant with such horrors, to be carried? Where is it to stop? Not till you establish the House of Bourbon! And this you cherish the hope of doing, because you have had a successful campaign. Why, Sir, before this you have had a successful campaign. The situation of the allies, with all they have gained, is surely not to be compared now to what it was when you had taken Valenciennes, Quesnoy, Condé, &c. which induced some gentlemen in this House to prepare themselves for a march to Paris. With all that you have gained, you surely will not say that the prospect is brighter now than it was then. What have you gained but the recovery of a part of what you before lost? One campaign is successful to you—another to them; and in this way, animated by the vindictive passions of revenge, hatred, and rancour, which are infinitely more flagitious, even, than those of ambition and the thirst of power, you may go on for ever; as, with such black incentives, I see no end to human misery.

And all this without an intelligible motive—all this because you may gain a better peace a year or two hence! So that we are called upon to go on merely as a speculation—We must keep Bonaparte for some time longer at war, as a state of probation. Gracious God, Sir! is war a state of probation? Is peace a rash system? Is it dangerous for nations to live in amity with each other? Is your vigilance, your policy, your common powers of observation, to be extinguished by putting an end to the horrors of war? Cannot this state of probation be as well undergone without adding to the catalogue of human sufferings? “But we must *pause!*” What! must the bowels of Great Britain be torn out—her best blood be spilt—her treasure wasted—that you may make an experiment? Put yourselves, oh! that you would put yourselves in the field of battle; and learn to judge of the sort of horrors that you excite. In former wars a man might, at least, have some feeling, some interest,

that served to balance in his mind the impressions which a scene of carnage and of death must inflict. If a man had been present at the battle of Blenheim, for instance, and had inquired the motive of the battle, there was not a soldier engaged who could not have satisfied his curiosity, and even, perhaps, allayed his feelings—they were fighting to repress the uncontrolled ambition of the Grand Monarque—But if a man were present now at a field of slaughter, and were to inquire for what they were fighting—“Fighting!” would be the answer; “they are not fighting, they are *pausing*.” “Why is that man expiring? Why is that other writhing with agony? What means this implacable fury?” The answer must be, “You are quite wrong—Sir, you deceive yourself—They are not fighting—Do not disturb them—they are merely *pausing*!—this man is not expiring with agony—that man is not dead—he is only pausing! Lord help you, Sir! they are not angry with one another; they have now no cause of quarrel—but their country thinks that there should be a pause. All that you see, Sir, is nothing like fighting—there is no harm, nor cruelty, nor bloodshed in it whatever—it is nothing more than a *political pause*!—it is merely to try an experiment—to see whether Bonaparte will not behave himself better than heretofore; and in the mean time we have agreed to a pause, in pure friendship!” And is this the way, Sir, that you are to shew yourselves the advocates of order? You take up a system calculated to uncivilize the world—to destroy order—to trample on religion—to stifle in the heart, not merely the generosity of noble sentiment, but the affections of social nature; and in the prosecution of this system, you spread terror and devastation all around you.

Sir, I have done. I have told you my opinion. I think you ought to have given a civil, clear and explicit answer to the overture which was fairly and handsomely made you. If you were desirous that the negotiation should have included all your allies, as the means of bringing about a general peace, you should have told Bonaparte so; but I believe you were afraid of his agreeing to the proposal. You took that method before. Aye, but you say the people were anxious for peace in 1797. I say they are friends to peace now; and I am confident that you will one day own it.—Believe me, they are friends to peace; although, by the laws which you have made, restraining the expression of the sense of the people, public opinion cannot now be heard as loudly and unequivocally as heretofore.—But I will not go into the internal state of this country. It is too afflicting to the heart to see the strides which have been

made by means of, and under the miserable pretext of this are, against liberty of every kind, both of power of speech and of writing; and to observe in another kingdom the rapid approaches to that military despotism which we affect to make an argument against peace. I know, Sir, that public opinion, if it could be collected, would be for peace, as much now as in 1797: and I know that it is only by public opinion—not by a sense of their duty—not by the inclination of their minds, that Ministers will be brought, if ever, to give us peace.

I conclude, Sir, with repeating what I said before: I ask for no gentleman's vote who would have reprobated the compliance of Ministers with the proposition of the French Government; I ask for no gentleman's support to-night who would have voted against Ministers, if they had come down and proposed to enter into a negotiation with the French: But I have a right to ask—I know, that in honour, in consistency, in conscience, I have a right to expect, the vote of every honourable gentleman who would have voted with Ministers in an Address to His Majesty, diametrically opposite to the motion of this night.

The House divided,

Ayes, for the Address against Negotiation, 260

Noes, - - - - - 64

A LIST OF THE MINORITY

Against the Address, thanking His Majesty for refusing to negotiate.

Adair, R.

Anson, J.

Astley, J.

Aubrey, Sir J.

Barclay, G.

Biddulph, R.

Birch, J. R.

Bird, W. W.

Bouverie, Hon. E.

Bouverie, Hon. W. H.

Burdett, Sir F.

Byng, G.

Cavendish, Lord G.

Colhoun, W.

Combe, H. C. (Lord Mayor)

Copley, Sir L.

Courtenay, J.

Denison, W. J.

Edwards, B.

Erskine, Hon. T.

Fletcher, Sir H.

Fox, Hon. C. J.

Green, J.

Grey, C.

Hare, J.

Harrison, J.

Heathcote, J.

Hill, Sir R.

Howard, H.

Jefferys, N.

Jekyll, J.

Jolliffe, W.

Knight, R. P.

Kemp, J.

Leicester, Sir J.

Lemon, Sir W.

Lemon, Colonel
 Lloyd, J. M.
 Martin, James
 Milner, Sir W.
 Nicholls, John
 North, D.
 Northey, W.
 Plomer, W.
 Pulteney, Sir W.
 Richardson, J.
 Robson, Rich. Bateman.
 Ruffell, Lord John
 Ruffell, Lord William
 St. John, Hon. St. A.

Shakespeare, A.
 Shum, G.
 Smith, W.
 Stanley, Lord
 Sturt, C.
 Taylor, M. A.
 Tierney, George
 Townshend, Lord J.
 Tufton, Hon. H.
 Vyner, R.
 Walwyn, J.
 Winnington, Sir E.
 Western, C. C.
 Wigley, E.

Sheridan, R. B.

TELLERS,

Whithread, Sam.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, February 4.

Nothing of any importance occurred.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, February 5.

Lord HOLLAND gave notice of a motion for that day se'nnight, respecting the late Expedition to Holland.

Ordered, that the House be summoned for that day.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, February 5.

Lord STOPFORD informed the House, that His Majesty had been pleased graciously to accept of the Address which had been passed in the Commons on Monday last.

Mr. ROSE moved the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of Supply, on that part of His Majesty's message which regarded the means of prosecuting the war with vigour.

This motion being agreed to, Mr. Bragge took the chair.

Mr. Rose then moved, "That a Supply be granted to His Majesty."

Mr. NICHOLL observed, that as this motion was of a general and undefined nature, he should not object to it in the first

instance: but he pledged himself to resist its application in a future stage of the business, unless some better principle of action was assigned for the continuation of the war, than that laid down in the course of the late debate.

The motion of Supply was then put to the vote, and agreed to,

Thursday, February 6.

Lord SHEFFIELD moved, "That there be laid before the House an account of the quantity of wheat, barley, and rye, exported and imported from the year 1794, to the latest period the same could be made out, specifying the different places from whence and to where the same had been imported and exported."

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved for leave to bring in a bill to continue an act, enabling His Majesty to avail himself of the voluntary services of the Militia; and also for leave to bring in bills to continue various other expiring laws.

Mr. WALLACE presented several accounts from the Admiralty Office, which were ordered to be laid upon the table.

Mr. BRAGGE brought up the Report of the Committee of Supply.

The Resolution of the Committee, "That a Supply should be granted to His Majesty," was read a first and second time.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that this House should to-morrow resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider of a Supply to be granted to His Majesty.

Mr. WALLACE gave notice of his intention in the Committee of Supply to vote the seamen for the remainder of the present year.

Mr. LONG moved for an estimate of the ordinaries of the Navy for the year 1800, and also of the Half-pay Officers of the Navy, and such of the Officers of the Marines as were employed in the last war.

Also for an estimate of the charges for rebuilding and repairing the ships in His Majesty's yards, and for the wear and tear of those in ordinary for the year.

Also for an estimate of the charges for Guards and Garrisons, and other Land Forces, for the year 1800.

Also for an estimate of the charges for the office of Ordnance for the Land Service for the year 1800, and for the variety of other annual accounts preparatory to the Budget.

He likewise moved for an account of the different Sums of Money issued by His Majesty, in pursuance of the Addresses of Parliament, and not provided for by Parliament.—Ordered.

Friday, February 7.

Lord HAWKESBURY informed the House, that His Majesty had been waited on with the Address of yesterday, praying that the estimates of the Navy and Ordnance services, the Barrack, Guard and Garrison estimates should be laid before the House, and that His Majesty had given orders accordingly.

Mr. BRAGGE brought up the Report of the Committee on the Expiring Laws. The resolutions were read; some were postponed, and bills ordered on others. He then moved, that the House should go into a Committee on Monday next, to consider farther on the resolutions that were postponed.

Lord HAWKESBURY moved, that it should be an instruction to the Committee now sitting for regulating the assize of bread, that they should take under their consideration the last crops of corn, and use such effectual means as may be most conducive to supply the deficiency.

Mr. Chancellor PITT brought in a bill for continuing so much of the acts of the 37th and 38th of his present Majesty, as may enable His Majesty to accept of the offer of the Militia force for a time to be limited therein. The bill was read a first, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday next.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt then brought in the bill for farther continuing the act for the better securing and punishing such persons as should attempt to seduce His Majesty's subjects from their allegiance, which was read a first, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday next. He then moved the order of the day for the House to go into a Committee of Supply to be granted to His Majesty.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Mr. WALLACE said, that on account of the reduced state of the enemy, from the surrender of so large a part of their marine force, he thought it would not be necessary to vote the full number of last year, which was 120,000 seamen, including marines. Should he propose a reduction of 10,000 there would then be for the service of the present year 110,000 men, including 22,000 marines. These, he was of opinion, would form an efficient force for the country.

Mr. NICHOLLS said, that he rose to oppose the resolution; and he wished it to be understood, that he did so on the principle that he opposed the war. The war was now avowed to be carried on, for the purpose of re-establishing the antient Government of France.—[A cry of "No no," from the Treasury Bench].—He

contended, that this inference was fairly drawn from Lord Grenville's note, as well as from the arguments used by Ministers in a late debate. It is true, Lord Grenville's note suggested, that the restoration of Monarchy in France was not the only circumstance by which His Majesty might be induced to open a negotiation, but it had been well remarked by an honourable gentleman, not now in the House (Mr. Fox,) that if a man offered his estate to another for a thousand pounds, and added, there are other circumstances which might induce me to let you have my estate, but refused to state those circumstances, it was manifest that he to whom the offer was made had only to consider, whether he would give the thousand pounds. A right honourable Secretary had, indeed, suggested, that if France was reduced to such a state as to be unable to hurt this country, we might then treat with her, although Monarchy was not restored. But this amounted to the same thing; for if France was reduced to such a degree of distress, it was obvious that we might impose on her any Government we thought proper. He thought the Minister had acted honestly in declaring the object for which the war was continued. Whenever the nation was involved in war, it was the duty of the Minister to state, in explicit terms, the object for which we were contending. In considering whether the war ought to be carried on for the purpose of re-establishing the ancient Government of France, the first reflection, which would occur to every man, was this, viz. Was it probable that we should succeed in our attempt? He thought it was not probable. He considered the extent of France,—a country containing thirty millions of inhabitants, enured to war, directed by able Ministers, and led by successful Generals. If he looked to the interior state of France, he saw great bodies of men interested to resist the re-establishment of the ancient Government: all those who held lands by titles acquired under the Republican Government; all who were benefited by the abolition of the feudal and ecclesiastical burdens; all who felt themselves relieved from a degraded state, by the abolition of that inequality of condition which prevailed under the ancient Government, would unquestionably exert their utmost efforts to prevent its re-establishment. If he considered the views of the other powers of Europe, he did not think it probable that the coalesced Princes would succeed in their attempt. The object of Austria was aggrandizement; would Russia long co-operate for this object? Would Prussia permit this aggrandizement to be carried to the extent it must be, if the power of France should be annihilated? And let it be remarked, that Prussia stands now in a different situation from what she did antecedently to the elevation

of Bonaparte to royalty, supported by that of which policy was probably this case France—from mu stagnatio endeavou find our desired were su the dan only, m supposita rica an ance o on con time o article be equ and i ous to they r profess marke produ been Exche from giving that afflic with canti confi trade in ca amon debt

of Bonaparte. The former Government of France, avowed hatred to royalty; the present Government of France is in a Chief supported by a military aristocracy, a constitution perfectly in unison with that of Prussia—with which she will always sympathise, and in which she will naturally place the most perfect confidence. The policy which seemed to guide the present Rulers of France would probably lead then to make peace with the states of America. In this case the Americans would attempt to carry on the trade of France—if they were permitted to do it, France would be relieved from much of that embarrassment which she had suffered from the stagnation of her commerce. On the other hand, if this country endeavoured to prevent it by seizing the American ships, we might find ourselves involved in disputes with the States of America. He desired the Committee to remark the risks and losses to which we were subject by the attempt. We were at this moment exposed to the danger of famine—perhaps the intercourse with France was the only means by which this danger could be averted; but even on the supposition that we could procure all the corn we wanted from America and the Baltic, the price was much increased by the continuance of the war; the freight and insurance paid in time of war, on corn from America, was 22 per cent. beyond what was paid in time of peace; on corn from the Baltic, about 15 per cent. This article alone was of great importance; the restoration of peace would be equivalent to a bounty of 22 per cent. on corn from America, and 15 on that from the Baltic. This House professed to be anxious to preserve the people from the miseries of famine; but if they refused to adopt the only certain and adequate means, their professions would be considered as mockery and falsehood. He remarked, that the war had deprived us of the sale of our West-India produce; within the present session the West-India merchants had been under the necessity of applying to Parliament for assistance in Exchequer Bills to relieve them from that distress which they suffered from the stagnation of their commerce. He said, he had voted for giving them that assistance: he knew their distress to be so great, that the measure was necessary. But let it be observed, that the assisting the merchant with Exchequer Bills, is perfectly inconsistent with principles of commerce: it created a dependance in the mercantile interest in the Minister. But this was not all; it was inconsistent with those terms on which the merchant professed to trade; for every merchant professed to trade on this footing, that, in case he was insolvent, his property should be equally divided amongst his creditors; but in case the insolvent merchant was a debtor to the Crown, the King, by his prerogative, seized all his

property, and the other creditors received nothing until the whole of what was due to the Crown was discharged. He said, he would not enumerate what His Majesty's Ministers might consider as matters of small consequence, such as the waste of wealth, the increase of taxes and national debt, the loss of lives, the immense price of all articles, and the necessity we had been under of having recourse to a new mode of taxation, *videlicet*, Requisition upon Income, which left every man's property at the mercy of the Minister's tribunals. But he wished the House to remark, how much the danger arising from the proposed Union with Ireland was increased by the war. It was highly probable that that measure might thwart the interests, and offend the feelings of many persons in Ireland. If insurrections should break out, war with France would necessarily increase the danger. To enable us to carry on this war with France, we had been obliged to establish a paper money—It was paper money whenever it was received, because gold could not be obtained: extending this paper money to supply the united wants of Government and commerce, there was a danger that we might violate that due proportion which ought to be observed between the paper circulation and the precious metals. Should this happen, the whole failure of public credit would be annihilated. But what are the advantages we expect, if we succeed in re-establishing the Monarchy of France? We are told, we shall be relieved from the inconvenience of treating with the present Government: but what is that inconvenience? we doubt the sincerity of Bonaparte: the obvious answer to that is, it is his interest to be sincere. But will the present Government of France be stable? As long as the peace is acceptable to the French nation, peace will be permanent, whether the present Government of France remains, or is succeeded by any other. But can we disarm? If France disarms, and her subjects apply themselves to peaceful employments, we may disarm. But we fear French principles. Do we fear ambitious or disorganizing principles? If we fear her ambitious principles, that sentiment would have prevented us from ever making peace with the antient Government of France. If we fear disorganizing principles, let it be observed, that the present Government of France is Anti-Jacobin; that the destruction of the political institutions, which existed under the antient Government, is complete in France; and that the present Rulers are solicitous not to destroy, but to preserve their political institutions. But they may still wish to destroy the political institutions of other countries. France has deprived herself of the instruments of destruction. Can she now say to the people, destroy the existing institutions of your country, and we will assist

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you in establishing a democracy? No; the people in every country now see, that though they may succeed in destroying the existing institutions of their country, their efforts to establish a Democracy will terminate in the establishment of an usurping Aristocracy. But if the antient Government of France is re-established, we might hope that Belgium might be taken out of the hands of France: Austria has already exchanged Belgium for the Venetian territories; and the situation of Europe has been so much changed since the peace of Utrecht, that he feared Belgium would belong to France, whatever might be the form of Government of that country. But if it was expected that France should content herself within her antient limits, might not France with equal justice expect that other powers should relinquish their acquisitions; that Russia, Prussia, and Austria, should give up the possession of Poland, and Great Britain the Mysore country? But we may make peace, when the experiment had been tried. Is this the language of a Statesman? Is war so light a matter, that it is to be continued as matter of experiment? But it has been said by His Majesty's Minister, that in 1787 the people wished for peace, and that they do not wish for it now. From what circumstance in 1797 did the Minister collect that the people wished for peace? Certainly not from the votes of this House; for his majorities were as strong at that period as they are at present. Will he state to us the criterion by which he discovered the sentiments of the people in 1797? We shall then know by that criterion, whether the same wish for peace is not prevalent at this day. He said, no object could be obtained by the war which could benefit either the King or his People. The King and his People had been deluded into the war. He believed even the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been deluded into the war. He had been deluded into the war by those great families who had uniformly and systematically avowed the design of controuling the King and his People by confederacy and combination. The manner in which those great families had fettered the authority of George the Second had attracted the notice of wise and honest men. When the Earl of Bute was called to office, he had endeavoured to break this combination. He failed in the attempt. In 1792, perceiving that the power which certain Peers had usurped of nominating 150 Members of the House of Commons, had been noticed in petitions to that House, they had deluded the King and the People into that war, that they might have an opportunity of calumniating those who wished to destroy their usurped power, as men infected with French principles, and desirous of destroying the political institutions of this country. He thought the continuance

of the war unnecessarily exposed the King and his family, and the welfare of his subjects.

Colonel J. H. ADDINGTON said, that nothing could have surprized him more than the notice he heard given by the honourable and learned gentleman, that he intended to propose withholding supplies from His Majesty in the prosecution of the present war, upon the principle on which it was to be carried on: that surprise was equalled, but not surpassed, by the manner in which the honourable and learned gentleman had endeavoured to induce the Committee to reject the vote which was now before it, that was to say, to refuse, in the present conjuncture, to grant supplies to His Majesty to carry on this most important contest. This subject had been discussed on a former occasion; arguments had been brought forward with all the force of which they were capable, against the measure of rejecting a negotiation; but they were answered by his right honourable friend in a manner that was irresistible; and all that had been urged against the conduct of His Majesty's Ministers upon that subject, had been anticipated by the arguments of his right honourable friend, so that it was unnecessary to follow them in the debate to-night: but there was one point, and one only, to which he should call the attention of the honourable and learned gentleman—In the last debate upon this subject, a friend of his, who was not now in the House, stated a very important point, and made upon it many useful observations—He said, “that if we could even obtain peace immediately, it would be highly improper in this country, under its present circumstances, to make such reductions in its naval and military establishment, as had been usual at the conclusion of former wars.” That was one of the most important observations that were made in that debate. It involved so much thought in a short sentence, and was so forcible, that not one of the gentlemen who spoke on the other side had attempted to answer it. Upon that point he should like to hear what the honourable and learned gentleman had to say. He should suppose him to be one of His Majesty's Ministers;—he should suppose also, that, as such Minister, overtures were made to him, expressive of the pacific disposition of the First Consul of the French Republic towards Great Britain, and, by the bye, Bonaparte was pretty lavish of his professions of sincerity to other powers, without having yet furnished one instance of such sincerity:—He would suppose that the honourable and learned gentleman was so determined in favour of Bonaparte, as to rely upon his mere professions, unaccompanied with any act to evince his sincerity, unattended with any recollection of his character, or reflection on the evidence of facts, or of doubts as to his

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ability to comply with his promises; but supposing all these difficulties to be surmounted, supposing the honourable and learned gentleman to be Minister of this country, and these overtures to be made to him, he would ask him, considering him as such Minister, whether, if a peace were made this hour, he would take upon himself the tremendous responsibility of advising His Majesty, under the present circumstances of affairs, to reduce the public expenditure by any very considerable reduction of our naval and military force? If he answered in the affirmative, which he did not expect, he would say, that the man who could give that advice, under the present circumstances of England and of all Europe, he would take the liberty to pronounce to be no Statesman, no lover of his country, nor of the permanent interest or tranquillity of Europe: if in the negative, why, then it followed, as of course, that the peace which could be the result of negotiation now, would be a mere shadow as to its advantage, but as to its real evils, would be worse than the expence of continuing the war. But he would not have the honourable and learned gentleman, nor any others who agreed with him in political sentiments, understand that those who supported the war, and who by the way would not, he was sure, be condemned by posterity, nor did he believe they were at this hour condemned by any considerable part of the people of England. He would not, he said, have these gentlemen understand that those who voted for the war loved it in the abstract; they adopted it as a choice between two evils. What were the advantages of peace without security?—He was not afraid of war with honour, nor of peace with security; but he was afraid of war wrapped up in peace—“*non ego pacem, neque bellum, sed bellum pace involutum reformido.*” These were the grounds and this was the principle on which he gave his vote to-night, and that on which he gave it on a former night, a vote the most satisfactory to his mind that he ever gave; he reflected with pleasure upon it, in common with the glorious majority, for glorious he took leave to call that majority, in which he had had the honour of voting upon this subject. He would say again, that under the present circumstances of all the public affairs of Europe, peace would be worse in its consequences than war. The effect of even a negotiation for peace would only be a delusion of the people of this country, who were enabled, under the blessings of Providence, to be formidable to their enemies, and to astonish the world by their resources and exertions. Their ardour was not abated. The effect of a negotiation would be to dishearten and dismay our allies, and to destroy the confidence of all Europe in the common cause. Should we by an infatuation, for such he must call it, now determine to negotiate,

by damping all the ardour of His Majesty's forces, and destroying the confidence of his allies, as well as the hopes of Europe? He hoped we should not. Viewing things in this light, he did really hope that the honourable and learned gentleman would feel as he did, and see the propriety of withdrawing his opposition to this motion; for he knew that if it were possible that the honourable and learned gentleman's sentiments could be adopted by the House of Commons, the people would feel it with sorrow, and he would venture to say that by the pursuit of such policy as that which was recommended by the honourable and learned gentleman, this country might be undone.

Mr. B. EDWARDS began by explaining what he considered to be the argument of the honourable and learned gentleman (Mr. Nicholls), as militating against the opposition of Ministry to negotiate for peace rather than as opposing the vote of supply. And he must say, that upon the ground of argument advanced by the honourable gentleman who spoke last, the war might be of an eternal duration. He, for one, could not agree to give his vote for an endless contest, with a view of restoring the Bourbon family, and keeping up internal animosities between Frenchmen and Frenchmen. On one point, he must acquit Ministers from the charge of inconsistency; for as it was evident from their present conduct that they did not mean to negotiate, so neither did he believe that they were sincere in their former proposals of negotiation. In his opinion Ministers had now an opportunity offered them of making peace, without any degradation of the national honour; they were not required to solicit peace, but rather to dictate it. All the very reasons which had been adduced against negotiating, derived from the exhausted state of the French finances, the capture of their colonies, &c. were in his opinion arguments for making peace. The poverty of France was the best pledge of her sincerity. Mr. Edwards then adverted to some of the circumstances of the war; the losses of men, and the relinquishment of St. Domingo: and in Holland a gallant army made to pass under the yoke. It was easy for men to speak of battles who had never fought; but the events of war were uncertain, and in the hands of the Almighty. It should be remembered, that no enemy was so dangerous and powerful as one driven to desperation. What was it that made the Buccaneers in America so dangerous, but that, having no resources in themselves, they were compelled to make a prey of all within their reach. Mr. Edwards said, he did not mean to oppose the vote of supply to the navy, but simply to object to the farther prosecution of the war, for which the vote was proposed.

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Mr. WILBERFORCE hoped that honourable gentlemen would not decide upon such a question, nor suffer themselves to be guided by mere general declamatory language, respecting the evils and calamities of war. He was persuaded there was none within these walls who did not bewail the calamitous events of war, and wish for peace; but gentlemen should recollect that the question at present was not, whether they would put an end to the war or not, but whether they supposed that by opposing the address and the vote of supply to His Majesty, they could thereby accomplish the desirable object of peace? If he, for one, thought that by opposing such a vote he could thereby put an end to the war, and at the same time produce a safe and honourable peace, he should not hesitate, and should readily agree that Bonaparte's proposals should not be rejected. But in forming an opinion upon a subject of this moment, there were many collateral circumstances respecting both countries, that ought to be taken into consideration. He, with the majority of that House, was of opinion that the danger to which this country had been exposed, was one of the greatest extent; not merely threatening, as in the case of former wars, the diminution of territory and population, but the loss of every thing which served to render society, and life itself comfortable. The arguments of gentlemen on the other side of the House, seemed to him to betray a want of sufficient attention to these considerations; they argued as if supposing that a treaty of peace could be entered into with the present Government of France, the same as upon any former occasion, not considering that the greatest danger to this country, arose from the lawless ambition, and the anarchical principles which reigned in France; principles which, at one time, threatened to infuse similar ones in the minds of the people of this country. These principles were like seeds scattered in the ground, which, though they lay hid, were not extinct, but rather waited for an opportunity of bursting forth. It was clearly the interest of this country, that it should not come into a sort of contact with France, without some security; that greater security would result from such accommodation, than from the warlike attitude which it had been found necessary to assume. But if peace were now made with France, he could not consider that there was a prospect of its being attended with security to this country. He confessed that he had held the same opinion at the time of the former negotiation, and all that had since happened had only served to strengthen it. The great question now was, whether, in the proposal for negotiation made by the Chief Consul of France, there was such a hope of security to this country, as would warrant Administration in listening to it, and discovering a readiness to treat?

He declared sincerely, that it was with heartfelt satisfaction, bordering on joy, that he read the answer of Ministers to the French proposals. The circumstances in which France was now placed, the character and conduct of the person now at the head of the Government of France were such, that we could not calculate upon him so as could be done in the ordinary situation of Monarchs, or as when treaties had been entered into with different powers upon former occasions. What security did he hold out, or on what did the very foundation of his power rest? Upon what ground could it be expected that we could place that security in the stability and permanence of this new Government, as in the case of old established Governments? He thought it perfectly fair and proper in Ministers to state the character and perfidy of that man (Bonaparte) as a ground of caution in them to treat; they had nothing on which they could calculate as to the sincerity or stability of his power. Perhaps at the very moment when he had made peace, he might find it necessary to league himself with those Jacobins, and to encourage those jacobinical principles which would prove a constant source of alarm. It rested in the very nature of things, that faithlessness in a character should create distrust; and surely there was danger in treating at the very time when we remained ignorant of many circumstances attending the present parties in France, which should be taken into account as guides to the deliberations of Administration. It was not to us, therefore, that the continuance of the war was to be imputed, but to those men who put France into such a situation as to afford no criterion by which we could form favourable conclusions concerning the present Governor and Government of France. It was even too liberal a conclusion to form at present, that Bonaparte was sincere in making peace. Might not his object be to sow the seeds of division between us and our allies, and not to make peace with all, but only with some of the contending powers? And in this event, we might be brought to contend under circumstances much more unfavourable than at present. Mr. Wilberforce then adverted to the debate on Monday, when an honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox), who very seldom of late had entered the House, had spoken at three in the morning, and had not appeared since, any more than he had done for a long time before. Owing to the late hour, and exhausted state of the Members, he, with others, had been precluded the opportunity of delivering their sentiments. That honourable gentleman had feelingly declaimed, and eloquently delineated the miseries of war. On this topic all must concur. But it was more in point to realize the idea of a negotiation. Under

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the advantage of this, Bonaparte would be collecting arms and ammunition, replenishing the store houses with provisions, &c. whilst in the mean time there was cause for suspicion, at least that he would be fostering the designs of the disaffected in Ireland, and thus promoting a system of rapine, plunder, rebellion, and murder. But if ever the time arrived when it should appear that peace could be made with the enemy consistently with the safety of the country, he for one would gladly lend himself in aid of any proposition to that effect. It was extreme injustice to impute to Administration an hostility to peace. He believed that it would gladly listen to such offers, or even make them, whenever they could do it consistently with the welfare and security of the country.

Mr. HOBHOUSE said, that as the specific proposition of supply before the Committee had given rise to a debate upon the policy or impolicy of rejecting the overtures of the French Government, he hoped that he might be allowed to offer his sentiments upon that general and highly important question. The honourable gentleman, who spoke last, had solicited a favourable hearing, upon the ground, that he had no opportunity of delivering his opinion on Monday last, when His Majesty's message was taken into consideration. Mr. Hobhouse said, that on that day he was confined at home by severe indisposition; and therefore he trusted that the indulgence granted to the honourable gentleman, would be extended also to him. He agreed with the honourable gentleman that the subject was, indeed, momentous, and involved the most essential interests; and that gentlemen should not state their crude and hasty observations to the House. They ought, as the honourable Member had well remarked, to have employed themselves in their closets; they ought to have examined what line of conduct the interest of their country, of Europe, and the world, demanded at the hands of the British Cabinet, and then, and then only, were they prepared to address the Committee upon this most solemn occasion. The result of *his* diligent and unbiassed investigation he (Mr. Hobhouse) would beg leave to communicate to the House.

The honourable gentleman had entered into a long justification of His Majesty's Ministers. Mr. Hobhouse proposed to examine those grounds of defence, which he had advanced.

Mr. Hobhouse declared, that he had no intention to inquire whether France or England had been the aggressor in this ruinous contest, or whether many opportunities of concluding a safe and honourable peace had not been neglected by the present Administration. These topics were rather irrelevant, and had been enlarged upon by gentlemen on the other side of the House, with a view to

divert the attention from the main subject under discussion. It signified not with whom rested the guilt of having *commenced* the war; if a good opening for bringing it to a termination had been disregarded by Administration, the guilt of having *continued* it unnecessarily, fell upon their heads; and a dreadful responsibility they had taken upon themselves. He could not, however, help advertising, since it had been made matter of inquiry which side was the aggressor, to an argument upon which great stress had been laid in another place. He alluded to a letter written by the unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth, in the year 1792, to his Britannic Majesty, in which he thanks his royal brother for not having joined the confederacy of Princes against the new Constitution of France. Hence it had been inferred, that England was acquitted of having been the author of the war upon the testimony of the French Monarch himself, expressed in a letter under his own hand, and dictated by this same Monsieur Talleyrand, now the Minister of Foreign Affairs under the Chief Consul, but then in the employ of the King. But by an attention to dates, it would be seen, that no such conclusion was warrantable. The letter was dated on the 1st of May 1792; but France never imputed to England any acts of hostility, until after the revolution on the 10th of August of the same year. The acts of which she complained, were the Alien bill, the prohibition to export even foreign corn to France, when it was allowed to be sent to other countries, and the dismissal of Monsieur Chauvelin, her Ambassador; and all these events took place subsequently to the letter of the King, and at the same time prior to the French declaration of war against England in February 1793; namely, in the Winter of 1792. Hence the letter of Louis the Sixteenth would, by no means, answer the purpose of the honourable gentlemen. Mr. Hobhouse said, that he had drawn the attention of the Committee to this letter, because no attempt had been before made, to shew how little it advanced the cause of those who maintained that the war was begun by France against England. He would not proceed to notice the other arguments which had been urged with the same view, because they had been completely refuted by the honourable gentlemen who had spoken so ably and so eloquently on the former night. He would now deliver his sentiments upon the real question, which lay in a small compass; namely, whether any good reasons could be assigned for rejecting the pacific overtures of France.

The honourable gentleman had contended, conformably to the language in Lord Grenville's letter, that a peace made with the existing Government of France could not be permanent, because

that Government. I state. I facts had he was not in urging never go of November Constitution cember order of accustom we were cradle, afterwards ham be sieur B desire to and was the be minate this p consti for th hands death was was the E state the the the whe Gov extr fiste wen to Go tol wi spi tw it

that Government was recently established, and in a very unsettled state. It was necessary, therefore, to wait until experience and facts had afforded an evidence of its stability. Mr. Hobhouse said, he was not a little astonished at the inconsistency of Administration, in urging, as an objection to negotiation now, a reason which had never governed their conduct upon former occasions. On the 1st of November 1795, the first Directory appointed under the new Constitution were installed at the Luxembourg. On the 8th of December following, His Majesty's Ministers had declared, that "an order of things had arisen in France, capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of peace and amity." Thus it appeared that we were willing to negotiate at that time, with a Government in its cradle, with a Government not many weeks old. A few months afterwards, namely, in the beginning of March 1796, Mr. Wickham began to sound the feelings of France, and in a note to Monsieur Barthelemi, Envoy from the French Directory, expressed a desire to know, whether the rulers of France were inclined to peace, and would consent to a General Congress of Ambassadors from all the belligerent powers, that the calamities of war might be terminated. It should be remembered, Sir, said Mr. Hobhouse, that this proposal was made to the same Directory, the first which was constituted; a Directory composed, in part, of men, who had voted for the execution of Louis the Sixteenth, who had imbrued their hands in the blood of their lawful Sovereign, that Sovereign whose death it was the object of the war to avenge. What, he asked, was the state of circumstances in France, when Lord Malmesbury was sent to Paris, in September 1796, to negotiate a peace with the Executive Government of that country? It was at that time stated in the House by many of the gentlemen opposite to him, that the finances of France were in a ruinous condition, that she was on the verge, if not in the gulph of bankruptcy; and yet at that time, when pecuniary distress seemed to threaten the annihilation of the Government, with that Government, apparently dying and in its last extremities, there was no objection to negotiate. But the inconsistency would appear still more striking, if the situation of France were taken into consideration, when Lord Malmesbury was dispatched to Lisle for the purpose of making new overtures to the French Government. He received his orders in June 1797. We were told at that time in this House, nay, the walls constantly echoed with the sound, that since April 1797, but two months before, a spirit of moderation had shewn itself in the Councils, that in the two legislative bodies this party of *modérés* was considerable, so that it became a duty in Administration to try whether peace could not

be restored to the two countries. Our Ambassador waited two months the issue of a struggle between these *modérés*, and a triumvirate in the Directory; and had the former been victorious, in the very hour of triumph the relations of peace and amity could have been preserved by them. Nay, Lord Mahmebury remained at Lisle, after the event of this contest, shewing himself ready to negotiate with the Triumvirate, notwithstanding they had infringed upon the Constitution, in a most flagitious manner, by committing an act of most unjustifiable violence against two of their colleagues, and a considerable number of the representatives, in banishing them to Guiana without even the form of a trial. But this plea of not thinking it right to make peace with a Government "recently established," is not only inconsistent with the past conduct of Administration, but with the language in other parts of Lord Grenville's letter to Monsieur Talleyrand. "The restoration of that line of Princes, which for so many centuries maintained the French nation in prosperity at home, and, in consideration and respect abroad, would at once have removed, and will at any time remove, all obstacles in the way of negotiation or peace." Thus it appeared, that notwithstanding the system so newly established was now an impediment to treaty, it would prove no obstacle in case of the re-establishment of monarchy in the antient line of Kings. From that moment negotiation might be commenced, though the Throne, erected upon the ruins of a democracy which had existed for many years, must necessarily be for some time insecure, and totter under its possessor. Nay, the *present* conduct of Administration was at variance with the ground assigned for rejecting the overtures of Bonaparte. If negotiation must be delayed, until it was seen how far the Government in France was stable, then, during the interval, this country should accept an armistice, should rest upon its arms, should be perfectly neutral; for it was most strange to decline negotiation until time should prove the Government of a nation to be stable, while we were, at the same time, endeavouring to subvert it by force of arms. Could such be deemed a fair experiment? Thus it was evident, that to shut the door against negotiation until "experience and facts" had borne testimony to the solidity of the new system, militated most strongly against the practice of Ministers on all former occasions of the same kind, against a positive declaration of Lord Grenville in another part of his reply to the French Minister, and against the *present* conduct pursued by the English Cabinet. "But if we must wait," exclaimed Mr. Hobhouse, "in God's name how long must we wait? What period can be assigned when the nation may expect no longer to endure

“ the calamities and horrors of war, and again to enjoy the blessings of
“ peace? Why, Sir, by means of this plea, Ministers may profe-
“ cute the war *ad eternum*; they have only to assert that they are
“ not yet convinced of the solidity of the system, and as the most
“ ancient Governments have been overthrown, this language will
“ suit every time and season. And let me ask what “ experience,”
“ what “ facts,” will convince Ministers of the solidity of the
“ French form of Government? Should France reassume the
“ career of victory, repossess herself of Italy, and defeat new inva-
“ sions on her own coasts and those of her allies, would such tri-
“ umphs, would such prosperity, remove all fears respecting the in-
“ stability of her Government? or should defeat attend her arms,
“ and fortune frown upon her belligerent enterprizes, whilst her
“ Constitution remained firm, and unshaken by such storms and
“ convulsions, would you then be satisfied that France had a Go-
“ vernment capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of
“ peace and amity? Is the prosperity, or adversity of France to be
“ regarded, as the test of the stability of her recently established
“ system? Let Ministers declare to the country their criterion of
“ the solidity of a Government, that a suffering people may know
“ when their sufferings will be at an end, and the miseries of war
“ be terminated. I call upon them for an answer, in the name of
“ the English nation.” Mr. Hobhouse then adverted to the fallacy
of the reasoning, which concluded, that because a Government may
not be stable, peace would not be permanent. He contended that
the duration of a peace did not depend upon the changes which took
place in forms of government, but upon the temper and interests of
a country. France had for some time past, even previously to the
last Revolution, evinced a spirit of moderation and peace. It was
seen in the addresses of the generals to the army, and many other
public documents. It was seen in the Council of Antients, which
refused to ratify a resolution of the other Council, namely, that no
peace should be made with their enemies, if the proposals violated
the integrity of the Republic. They were ready to purchase peace
by parting with some of those conquered territories which had been
before considered as inseparably united with the Republic. In con-
cert with the Council of Antients, Bonaparte had acted when he
overturned the former order of things, and substituted another which
reduced the Council of Five Hundred to the mere phantom of its
former power. The same pacific inclination which the Council of
Antients had exhibited, the Chief Consul now manifested. But
if gentlemen would shut their eyes against such proofs, they had a
substantial security for the permanence of a peace, arising from ano-

ther source. It was the constant language of the other side of the House, that France was in a ruined and desperate condition ; that her agriculture had been long neglected ; that she had no marine ; that she had not a merchants ship in her ports ; that her commerce was annihilated. If this were so, what better pledge of peace could be desired than the debility, and impotence of the foe ? France had need of long repose, long relaxation, to recover the waste of war : would she soon be possessed of power to disturb the tranquillity of Europe ? Certainly not. The temper and interest of France afforded a better assurance that a durable pacification with her might now be concluded, than any which a Prince of the line of Bourbon could give.

Another argument urged by the honourable gentleman, in defence of the prosecution of the war, without even suffering the proposals of the enemy to be heard, was founded on the depravity of all the past Governments in France since the overthrow of the Monarchy, and on the perfidious and infamous character of Bonaparte. Hence a long list of shocking enormities, and violated treaties, had been represented to the House in the most glowing colours. Hence the honourable gentleman, who could not condemn such unjustifiable proceedings more than himself, had asked the question, whether the present overtures might not be insidious. Might it not, he had said, be the object of Bonaparte to lull us into a state of security by peace, that he might afterwards take some unfair advantage ? No doubt it might. But these queries were no less applicable to France under the monarchical, or any other form of Government besides the present. It should be recollected, that the French and Spanish Ministers, at the very time that they signed the treaty of peace in 1763, entered into a secret agreement for the seizure of Falkland Islands. If Ministers would not listen to overtures, because France might, perhaps, at the present moment, be looking forward to some future project of a hostile nature against Great Britain, war must be eternal. What Government hesitated to break a treaty of alliance, or peace, if the lust of dominion could be gratified ? “ But Sir,” said Mr. Hobhouse, “ how long is it “ since the present Administration has become thus strictly moral, “ thus scrupulous, thus tender in their consciences ? They have “ been seeking for a considerable time past to renew an alliance “ with a northern power, who, as was mentioned by my honourable “ friend the other night (Mr. Whitbread) accepted your money, “ and never performed the stipulated services. They are now con- “ nected with a Prince, who, for a base bribe, once deserted the cause “ of his allies, and who now refuses to acknowledge, as a loan,

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"the sum advanced to him by this country, and insists upon it being considered in the light of a subsidy. If my information be incorrect, let it be shewn that I am under a mistake. I shall be happy to learn that my intelligence is erroneous." Mr. Hobhouse, after having made a short pause, and received no answer, resumed, and said, that having examined the grounds, or rather pretexts (for arguments so futile could be considered in no other point of view) upon which the honourable gentleman, and the other supporters of Administration, attempted to justify the rejection of the overtures proposed by Bonaparte, he should now explain what he believed to be the real object of the British Cabinet.

He agreed with his honourable friends (Mr. Nicholls and Mr. Edwards) that the war was prosecuted for the sole purpose of establishing the Bourbons upon the Throne of France. The language of Lord Grenville would, in plainness and common sense, bear no other interpretation. In page 13 of the first part of the printed correspondence, is the following passage—"The best and most natural pledge of the reality and permanence of a change of principles in France, would be the restoration of that line of princes, which for so many centuries maintained the French nation in prosperity at home, and consideration and respect abroad." In the next paragraph, His Majesty was made to assert, that he did not limit himself to that mode "exclusively." Now what else could be the meaning of these sentences than this?—We were to fight most strenuously and boldly, in conjunction with our allies, that the Bourbon family might regain the sceptre of France; but since the chances of war were many, and various, we had, like prudent generals who calculated always upon the possibility of defeat, left an opening, if our means should prove inadequate to the sole end which we desired, for negotiation even with the present existing Government in France. That this was the right construction, appeared not only from Lord Grenville having avoided to point out any other form of Government which would prove satisfactory to Great Britain, but also from the line of argument which, during this discussion, had been adopted by the honourable gentlemen on the other side of the House. They abused every form of Government which had taken place in France, since the destruction of the regal despotism. All of them they had declared, were marked by depravity; all had violated the several treaties they had concluded; but the Bourbon family, if restored to the Throne, "would give to all the other nations of Europe, in tranquillity and peace, that security, which they were now compelled to seek by other means."

This praise, confined as it was to the *ancien regime*, and this indiscriminate attack upon the other numerous governments which had since arisen in France, certainly tended to confirm the meaning he (Mr. H.) had annexed to Lord Grenville's language, and to shew that the object of the war was the re-establishment of the Bourbons. Whether the restoration of that family whose ambition had produced so many bloody wars with England, and the powers on the Continent, would give to all the nations in Europe tranquillity and a secure peace, he should not wait to discuss; but surely it might well be doubted.

"Are we then," said Mr. Hobhouse, "to expend the blood and treasure of the kingdom in pursuit of a hopeless project? To restore the Bourbon Princes, by means of war, is impracticable, absolutely unattainable. You have aimed at the accomplishment of it for many long years, but in vain; you have made the most strenuous exertions, but in vain. During the last year, you were assisted by the most powerful allies; you had numerous and well-appointed armies, conducted by the most able and experienced generals; you gained many brilliant successes in the commencement of the campaign; but where did you find yourselves at the close of it? Your career of victory was stopped; and let me ask, whether you be in the least nearer to the enjoyment of your favourite object? Is the heir of the House of Bourbon nearer to the possession of his regal inheritance? Nay, I have the authority of the honourable gentleman (Mr. Wilberforce) in confirmation of my opinion, that you cannot by an armed force rebuild the Throne of the Bourbons. When he made a motion in this House respecting peace during the year 1795, he contended strongly, that war had a tendency to prevent counter-revolution, and to strengthen the power, which it opposed. Such language appears highly inconsistent with his present conduct. How he can justify it, I know not."

Mr. Hobhouse then proceeded to state the sad consequences of a war, avowedly carried on for the purpose of restoring the antient line of princes. He contended that Ministers had furnished Bonaparte with matter for a most popular address to the French nation. That General might say—"I promised that I would exert myself to procure for you the blessings of peace; I have made an overture to Great Britain, but she treated it with scorn and contumely. I took no offence at the haughty refusal, but wrote another letter, temperate and free from reproach, to the British Court; but my second attempt to negotiate, was attended with no better fate.

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"Let that Court be responsible for all the future blood which may be shed during this unhappy war: You perceive that it is her wish to re-establish the old tyranny and the Bourbon race, to rebuild the Bastile, to revive antient abuses, and the long train of feudal oppressions." In this manner, said Mr. Hobhouse, Bonaparte would be enabled to unite against England all parties, *Jacobins* and *modérés*, and every person interested in maintaining the present constituted authorities. He would call forth the energies of the whole nation; he would arm the citizens *en masse*. The war would be continued with increased vigour, and the events which might follow were too painful to contemplate. The pride of England might be humbled; what had happened, might happen again. When Mr. Wickham requested to be informed by Monsieur Barthelemi whether France were inclined to pacification, he studiously avoided to use the words, "French Republic," in every part of his note; but in the subsequent negotiations, Lord Malmesbury recognized the French Republic in express terms. The time might come, when Lord Grenville, who in his letters called Bonaparte by no other name than General Bonaparte, lest he should seem to acknowledge his authority, would not hesitate to address him as Chief Consul of the French nation. The time might come, when we should be glad to accept peace upon conditions inferior to those which now, probably, would have been offered to us. At one period we would not conclude a peace with France "without indemnity for the past and security for the future"; but we were afterwards ready to negotiate upon the basis of "mutual compensation." At one period we insisted upon the surrender of the Netherlands, as the *sine qua non* condition of peace; but we, afterwards, offered to leave that rich territory in the hands of France. The same scene might be acted over again. It was observed by that sagacious politician, Mr. Hume, in his Essay on the Balance of Power, that "our wars with France had always been too far pushed from obstinacy and passion. The same peace, 'he had remarked,' which was afterwards made at Ryswick in 1697, was offered so early as the year 1692—that concluded at Utrecht in 1712, might have been finished on as good conditions at Gertruydenberg in 1708; and we might have given at Frankfort in 1743, the same terms which we were glad to accept at Aix la Chapelle in 1748".—Mr. Hobhouse feared that a similar humiliation, after a prodigal expenditure of blood and money, would be the final result of this obstinate determination on the part of His Majesty's Ministers to close their ears against the proposals of Bonaparte; and he reprobated their conduct, as no less inconsistent, than rash, precipitate, and im-

politic. The present Administration, he said, had been willing to treat with France, when her constitution was only in its infancy; but now overtures of pacification must not even be received, because their present order of things has been "so recently established." The present Administration had offered terms of peace to France, when her Government was founded on the Rights of Man, when she encouraged principles of anarchy, when she conceived the most gigantic projects of ambition; but now no negotiation must be opened, until "better principles have prevailed, until all the gigantic projects of ambition, and all the restless schemes of destruction, which have endangered the very existence of civil society, have been finally relinquished." The present Administration had repeatedly declared, in the name of His Majesty, that "he would, at all times, be *eager* to concur in the work of peace, "whenever a pacific disposition should shew itself on the part of France; but they had now violated all their promises. And what was the defence which had been employed in justification of such a breach of public faith? Such declarations were not intended to be eternally binding. The situation of things was changed. The face of our affairs was more prosperous. We had forced the whole of Italy out of the hands of the French; we had reaped the greatest advantages from the splendid victory at the mouth of the Nile. "Why, Sir," said Mr. Hobhouse, "what a piece of Jesuitism is this? Is this State-logic quite consistent with the strict rules of morality, which Ministers profess? A solemn pledge repeatedly given to open negotiation at all times, and whenever France should manifest a pacific disposition, was accompanied by a mental reserve, interpreting the words to mean *some* times. If ill success should attend our arms, then are our engagements considered to be in full force; but they are cancelled by a course of prosperity. Do not His Majesty's Ministers thus manifest the same treachery which they impute to the enemy? Can such men arraign, with propriety, the depravity of the French Government, and the crimes and perfidy of Bonaparte?"

"I have done, Sir. My honourable friend over the way (Colonel Addington) triumphed in one part of his speech, because he had been one of the 'glorious majority' of 201, on Monday last. I can only say for myself, that had not my attendance been prevented by sudden illness, I should have voted very differently from him; I should have joined that minority which, however small their number, is as much distinguished by virtue and talents, as the *glorious* and so much boasted majority."

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Lord HAWKESBURY declared that his sentiments and feelings completely concurred with what his honourable friend (Mr. Wilberforce) had delivered. The present question did not lie in that large compass taken by those gentlemen who opposed the address. Their arguments in favour of negotiation must proceed, either because they think the present Government of France to be a stable one, or that, by treating with it, they wish to give it an artificial stability; or else that they are of opinion, that neither stability nor character in a Government are necessary preliminaries to a negotiation with it. Upon these points, he and the gentlemen in opposition were perfectly at issue. In the course of this war, during the last seven years, they had seen in France seven great revolutions, and four smaller ones; and he was perfectly at a loss to know what reason could be assigned for encouraging the expectation of any greater stability to the present Government. As to the character of this new Government, we had no other criterion to judge by than by the character of individuals who composed it; now, if we found the character of those men, from their conduct towards other countries, to be such that there could be no confidence in them whatever, with what propriety could we negotiate with them? It had, indeed, been said, that the character of other Governments in France and in Europe, had been bad, and yet you did not refuse to treat with them. But surely the different degrees of this depravity ought to be taken into account. With regard to other governments, there had hitherto been some system in Europe which had secured them from their overleaping certain bounds; nor was there any doubt as to the stability of their Government: but now what was the probability that the new Government of France would not be changed? The only possible ground on which gentlemen might recommend negotiation (if neither the stability of the Government, nor character of the leading men were to be regarded) was at all events to try to make peace and take your chance of consequences: but this was such a sort of policy for their country to adopt, as amounted to little short of madness, more especially considering the present flourishing state of its commerce and revenues. It ought to be considered that in no other country was there so great a disparity between the peace and war establishments as in this. He trusted, therefore, that Administration would pause before they let down the war machine, since they were now able to carry on the war, so long as the ambition and injustice of the enemy rendered it necessary: Whereas by entering at present into a negotiation with France, her commerce and exhausted resources would revive. And would it be prudent that for a peace unaccompanied with any security, this country

should disarm, and put it into the power of the enemy to recommence hostilities against us within a short time, and to infinitely greater advantage than we could now pursue it? His Lordship reminded the House, that as soon as a change appeared to have taken place in France, by the destruction of the system of terror, and repealing some of their most odious decrees, it was the leading idea of many persons (though with different shades of opinion, as to the expediency or probability of success) to try the experiment of negotiation. The experiment was tried by Mr. Wickham, in the spring 1796; and by Lord Malmesbury at Paris, in spring 1797, and at Lisle in autumn 1797. But now, he thought, there was no person but must now rejoice at the failure. Since then, the most atrocious acts had been committed towards other powers; Italy, Switzerland, America, the Porte, &c. and all by that very Government professing moderation. Experience had now sufficiently proved the danger of entering into any negotiation with any branch of this revolutionary system, and proved that when it held out any wish for negotiation, it was in order to promote its own ambitious views. When the ability and situation of this country respecting finance, &c. were considered, additional encouragement was presented to a steadfast perseverance in the contest. His Lordship said, that he for one, anxiously wished for the restoration of the House of Bourbon, on the ground of humanity, and of public justice, and as the only way of blotting out from the page of history, the incalculable injuries which had been committed by the revolutionary Government. He could see no other ground to expect definitive security, nor that any other form of Government could maintain France in a state of internal peace, or secure the treaties she might enter into with other countries; but if a system should arise in France, acting on principles of moderation, and according to the usages established for the last two hundred years, and contrary to that which has governed France for the last ten years, give us once this test, and we are satisfied. It was of importance that this country should act with firmness and perseverance in a cause in which we have borne so honourable a part, till it be brought to a favourable conclusion. Never had this country stood higher in the estimation of foreigners and foreign powers. His Lordship said, it was with satisfaction he had read in last Saturday's Gazette, the dying words of one of the best of men (the Advocate Steiguer), "recommending his country, under God, to His Majesty's special protection, and praying most earnestly for the blessings of God on His Majesty and on his Subjects." And this, he believed, was not the prayer of one but of thousands. It was a duty which this country owed to Providence for the blessings which it en-

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joyed, and to the world, to lend its assistance to the rest of Europe, to deliver it from the wild ambition of France. Thank God, he believed that the only part of Europe which did not speak well of this country was confined to that very small portion which constituted the Opposition in this country; whatever remained of property, religion, and social order, remained in this country. His Lordship said, he doubted not but a perseverance in the same line of conduct which this country had thus far pursued, would lead to success; and truly sorry should he be, if a narrow minded policy were to lead us to patch up a peace contrary to its permanent welfare, and its truest interests.

The vote of supply then passed, and the usual sums were voted for the seamen and marines for the eleven lunar months of the year 1800.

Mr. PITT brought up the army estimates for the service of the year 1800, which were laid on the table.

The Annual Indemnity Bill went through a Committee—To be reported on Monday.

Friday, February 10.

DUTCH EXPEDITION.

Mr. SHERIDAN rose for the purpose of making his promised motion, for an inquiry into the cause of the failure of the Expedition against Holland; and delivered himself in substance as follows:

“Sir, upon the extraordinary meeting of Parliament on the 24th of September last, an opportunity occurred of discussing the propriety of reducing the Militia force of the country, by the introduction of a bill to carry that measure farther than had been done by the act of the preceding Session. The avowed purpose of that bill was, to enable Ministers to prosecute the Expedition against Holland. Unfortunately, I then differed from some of those gentlemen with whom I always feel it painful to disagree upon political questions. I did not think that, in the peculiar circumstances in which we then were placed, it was proper to oppose the measure. I will repeat the reasons which then dictated my conduct. I then disapproved, as much as I had ever done, that bill, as a dangerous violation of our great constitutional defence, the Militia system. When it was proposed, however, to renew and extend the act, there were inducements to a reluctant acquiescence in its renewal, which did not exist upon its first adoption. The law had passed, and Ministers had availed themselves of its provisions to assemble that army

which was engaged in the Dutch expedition. We had received accounts of the battle of the 19th of September at Bergen. Our troops were in a critical situation; and, seeing no other means by which reinforcements could be procured, I was unwilling that any thing should be done that could lead our gallant army to think for a moment that they were abandoned by a British Parliament.

“ On that occasion likewise I assumed, that Ministers, in prosecuting the attempt which they had begun, acted on the most authentic information of the favourable dispositions of the Dutch people. I stated, that the Executive Government, in relying upon their knowledge, and proceeding upon their intelligence, incurred a great responsibility. Having done so then, I should conceive that I shrunk from a sort of pledge that I had given, did I not now endeavour to make Ministers answer for the confidence which they had obtained, and for the course which they had pursued. I was indeed inclined to entertain no very sanguine hopes of ultimate success in the enterprise, after the experience we had of its commencement. My apprehensions were removed in some measure when I heard it stated by a right honourable gentleman opposite to me, that we had the most unquestionable information of the attachment of the Dutch to the cause we supported. I was again damped in these agreeable expectations, when I found that the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) shrunk from any declaration that Ministers proceeded on such sure ground, when he said that we were justified in the prosecution of the plan, by a knowledge, not of the actual state and disposition of the Dutch people, but by a knowledge of human nature—a knowledge now recorded in characters of blood and woe upon the coasts of Holland. When I heard this alledged as sufficient foundation for our experiment, I again despaired of a favourable result.

“ As to the inquiry which I shall have the honour to propose, few arguments, I should think, will be necessary to prove that it ought to be adopted. When the news arrived of the total failure of the expedition, a failure so disastrous, so disgraceful, so humiliating, to those by whom it was planned, while no blame can attach to the conduct of the gallant officers and men whose efforts were thus rendered unprofitable, the universal cry was, that an inquiry should be instituted by the House into the causes by which so ignominious an event was occasioned. Whether the public feeling of indignation has cooled in the interval that has elapsed, or not, I will not take upon me to say. The right honourable gentleman, however, did every thing in his power to prevent any motion for inquiry while the disgrace was yet recent, and the feeling of the country warm. With the intelligence in his possession, of what

amounted to nothing less than the overthrow of all our hopes of ultimate success, Parliament was adjourned; every attempt to investigate was rendered impossible; and the resentment and mortification of the public were left to sink away of themselves, or to be diverted by fresh occurrences.

"I profess, Sir, that in bringing this subject before the House, I do not consider it as a party question. It is one that can admit of no party feeling. It is a question that in the highest degree interests every feeling for the glory of the country, every sentiment of humanity for the loss our troops have sustained, for the honour which they have to support. As Members of this House, we are called upon by the sacred duty we owe to our constituents, to investigate a transaction, which, on the face of it, presents so much argument for inquiry; and which, in its consequences, has been attended with such a waste of blood, and expence of treasure. In treating of this question, I shall not proceed upon such private information as every gentleman in this House may have had an opportunity to obtain. I shall found my arguments and conclusions upon the recorded accounts of Ministers themselves in their own Gazettes, upon the information furnished by them in their proclamations and treaties. I shall not consider the advantages of having obtained possession of the Dutch fleet. That acquisition I view, perhaps, as less important than others do, and I shall take an opportunity of saying a few words respecting it. Excepting the Dutch fleet, then, what have we obtained to compensate for the loss of men, for the profusion of money, for the discredit we have incurred? I should be extremely glad to know what arguments will be employed to dissuade the House from agreeing to an inquiry. I hope we shall not to-night hear it urged against examining into the causes of an Expedition so wasteful in its attempt, so ignominious in its failure, that it might reveal what is not proper to be known, that it will interrupt the service, or produce those inconveniences which it has been usual to object to such a motion of inquiry. Arguments like these I have heard combated by the right honourable gentleman during the American war, and I hope he will not rely upon them now. Indeed, they have not in this case the plausibility they may have had in others. By investigating the causes of the failure of the Expedition to Holland, what is there to reveal that can be prejudicial to us in future? What interruption can it give to any part of the public service? I certainly cannot suppose, that it will be contended that there has been no failure. I cannot conceive, that the corrupt and clandestine surrender of the Dutch fleet will be viewed as the attainment of all our wishes, and the success of all our views.

Yet I see, that in the speech of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, on opening the Parliament of that country, something like this is advanced. The Marquis Cornwallis tells the Irish Parliament, that the expedition to Holland has been attended with such mighty advantages, that it will prevent the invasion of Ireland, and so forth, and merely speaks of it as having not quite succeeded. He speaks as if the main object of our policy, and of our efforts, was not the deliverance of the Dutch from the yoke of France; not the restoration of the House of Orange to their rights; not the protection of religion, the defence of social order; but the capture of a few Dutch ships of war had been the object of such expensive preparation and extraordinary efforts; as if for such an acquisition we have subsidized the mercenary magnanimity of Russia, for this called into action our military strength, and strained our financial resources. What other advantage than this then, I ask, have we obtained from this famed Secret Expedition? Secret, indeed, it was called, till the term became absolutely ridiculous. Never, indeed, was an undertaking conducted with such ostentatious mystery—never did the object of a Secret Expedition obtain such universal notoriety. The only thing secret in the Expedition was the favourable disposition of the Dutch people to our cause; a secret so well kept to be sure, that to this hour it has never been discovered.

“But I see by the gestures of the right honourable gentlemen opposite, that they are of opinion that the Dutch fleet is not the only thing we have gained. It may be so, to be sure, in a certain way. It was an Expedition of discovery, and not altogether unsuccessful in that view. We have made three notable discoveries:—we have, in the first place, discovered that there is no reliance to be placed in the Chancellor of the Exchequer’s knowledge of human nature; we have discovered, that Holland is a country intersected by dykes, ditches, and canals; and we have discovered, that the weather there, too, is not so good in October as it is in June! The instruction which we have thus obtained, is doubtless very valuable: it is a good thing to learn to distrust the knowledge of Ministers in human nature; the topography and climate of a country were good things also to be acquainted with. This information, however, may be purchased too dear. If we consider the number of lives which have been lost; if we reflect, that the tenth of every man’s income has been squandered, that so much of our best blood has been shed in vain, and all by the misconduct of Ministers, we shall have little reason to boast that our discoveries have been easily made, and our acquisitions cheaply purchased.

“I have already alluded to the capture of the Dutch fleet. I

must speak out fairly what I think. I do not prize this acquisition at a very high rate. When we are told that it has prevented the invasion of Ireland, we are to consider on what terms this capture was made. We took possession of the Dutch ships in the name of the Stadtholder. Are they to be manned with the mutinous crews who surrendered them, and employed in the name of the Stadtholder? if so, they are no addition to our navy. But it is said, if not an addition to our maritime strength, they at least are a deduction from that of the enemy. Yet if they were to be manned by those sailors who gave them up to England, they could never have been formidable to us as enemies. This boasted acquisition, then, in every view, appears to be of very little importance. When I reflect, however, upon the mode in which this acquisition was gained, I not only think it of little value, but consider it as of the most perilous example; I could wish we had won it in some other way, or not at all. I do not regret that it was not obtained at the expence of bloodshed, yet I tremble to see a deliberating navy in the face of the naval force of England; I dread to behold the example of seamen deciding upon the cause of their country, instead of fighting its battles. I do not like to see mutiny recommended to our sailors by any example or any approbation. I hope there is nothing in the temper of our navy to catch the infection. I like to see the spirit of Blake prevail, who told his sailors, that it was their duty to fight for their country, in whatever hands the Government might be. This is found reason; these are the safest maxims. It is not wise or politic to encourage any other. When we consider how the fleet was surrendered, I doubt much whether the conduct of the sailors afford any proof of the disposition of the people. We know, by fatal experience, that artifices may be successfully employed to delude even our own navy into a conduct which the nation universally disapproves. What were the means employed to produce that temper in the Dutch navy to which we owe the capture of the fleet? Were they such as can be avowed and justified? If Ministers encouraged and promoted a spirit of mutiny among the Dutch sailors, they ill understood the interests of their own country. They have departed from a great principle to serve a particular purpose. To gain a partial advantage, they have introduced a most dangerous precedent. Suppose that Admiral Story had resisted the spirit of mutiny and disobedience; suppose he had done what De Ruyter would have done in his situation, endeavoured to maintain his authority and perished in the attempt, would you have permitted your seamen to welcome the Dutch sailors, besmeared with the blood of their Admiral and Officers? Would you have sanctioned such a deed? Would you

have applauded the doers? Would you have allowed your seamen to become their allies and associates? Yet were it only the want of vigour in the officers that prevented this catastrophe, the example is the same; and we all know how dangerous such a violation is to the principle of discipline. It is not easy to guard against the contagion. When speaking of the character of our Navy, and the necessity of preserving it, I cannot help saying a word or two of practices that have long been permitted to disgrace its character, and corrupt its spirit. Every body must have heard of the system of sending United Irishmen on board the fleet. Culprits and vagabonds of every description, worthless wretches of every kind are thought good enough for His Majesty's service, and people speak of putting them on board ship as the fittest place in the world for their reception. Is it possible to conceive a more gross and palpable folly, a more shameful and dangerous abuse? For God's sake dispose of such people any where but in your Navy! Place them in your public offices. Send them to the Treasury, the Excise, the Customs. Provide for them in the War-office; feed them with cheese-parings and candle-ends, but do not convert your navy into a receptacle for rogues and traitors. Do not dispose of them in a way that makes them more dangerous than they could be any where else. What should you think, for instance, if your ships were to be built in the same way they are manned? What would you think if when a rotten beam were found in any public office, it were to be said, O! this won't do for His Majesty's use, send it to the Dock-yard? Yet the absurdity would be no greater than that which is practised every day in the manner I have stated. As you build your ships of the soundest wood, you should take no less care to man them with the soundest hearts.

"Entertaining these sentiments respecting the importance of preserving the spirit of your navy, I can as little approve the mode in which the Dutch fleet was gained, as I can enter into the views of those who represent the acquisition as of so much importance.—Take into consideration the whole of the case; weigh what you have lost and what you have gained, and you will find that there is a fearful balance against you. The result of the late Expedition has thrown discredit on your Councils; it has heaped dishonour on your operations. You cannot again repeat the attempt of restoring the House of Orange; you have left the pretensions of that family more desperate than ever. The confidence of their enemies is confirmed; the hopes of their partizans are overthrown. After this review, I confess I cannot conceive how any man can contend,

that the result of the Expedition has in any degree repaid our sacrifices, or realized our expectations.

“ As to the object of the Expedition, in so far as it aimed at the rescue of Holland from the dominion of France, and the Restoration of the House of Orange, I most readily agree, that in as far as it could have been attempted with any hopes of success, and with any regard to the actual circumstances of this country, it was as legitimate a British object as can be imagined. I admit that it was, in principle, as sound policy to oppose the French dominion in Holland in 1799, as it was to prevent its triumph in 1787. In proportion, however, as the object was wise and good, must be the criminality of those to whose misconduct its failure is to be attributed. If, by their gross negligence, their ignorance, and their presumption, we have failed in an undertaking so dear to every British heart, the value of the prize for which we contended only augments the mortification of our disappointment.

“ That the House of Orange has strong claims upon the gratitude, nay, upon the justice of Great Britain, I am sure I do not deny. They have well deserved that hospitable asylum which they enjoy in this country. They have ever been faithfully attached to its cause. Their expulsion from their hereditary authority in Holland, indeed, is in a great measure to be ascribed to their deference to British Councils, perhaps their devotion to the views of British Ministers. The restoration of that family to their fortunes and their rank, therefore, was in itself an honourable motive for our interference. I cannot at the same time agree in the opinion, that we had any particular claim to the attachment of the Dutch. I see it assumed in the proclamations addressed to them, that they must be ours in their hearts. I doubt the fact very much, and I am at a loss to discover upon what Ministers could have formed this supposition. I cannot but wonder how it was imagined that our attempt was agreeable to the general will of the people in Holland. When the prospect of restoring the House of Bourbon in France was under consideration in this House, the right honourable gentleman assured us, that such an attempt could not be successful without the general consent of the people; nay, that it ought not to succeed. Why then did he not apply the same reasoning to the case of Holland? Why do Ministers in the note, in answer to the proposals from the French Government, say, that His Majesty does not claim to prescribe a Government for France, if they do not admit the weight of the maxim? They surely do not admit the principle in the case of France, because she is strong, and deny it Holland because she is weak? What then had we to expect

from the concurrence of the Dutch? What influence ought their character and dispositions to have had upon the plan and conduct of the Expedition?

“It must be familiar to every gentleman who is acquainted with the relative connection of this country with Holland, that it is long since any cordiality prevailed between the two countries. The French faction had been increasing, and possessed a very powerful interest in the United Provinces. In this situation, grounds of dispute have arisen at no very remote period. In the American war, the Dutch complained bitterly of our aggressions. In answer to their complaints, the Dutch were represented in speeches and proclamations as a dull and stupid people. A noble Lord, then in Administration, used the extraordinary expression, that the Dutch must “be stunned into their senses.” By such treatment the influence of France was increased in Holland. Perhaps too, it is but fair to acknowledge, that the Dutch, in the mere view of promoting their own interests, might conceive the connection with France more beneficial to them than that with England. This led to the attempts which were made in 1787 to draw more close the connection with France. This design was prevented by the interference of this country, and by the efforts of a Prussian army. But, was this triumph used in such a way as to conciliate the Dutch? At the breaking out of the present war, the Dutch, against their own wishes, nay, against the remonstrances of many sincere friends of the House of Orange, were compelled to abandon their neutrality and to take a share in the war. They were engaged in the contest by our influence, but we were not able to protect them in the moment of difficulty. From being our allies, they became our enemies. But previous to this change, what were the symptoms of cordiality and good understanding when we were endeavouring to defend Holland? Did not our troops leave that country complaining of the people, irritated by their reproaches? After the success of the French invasion, was our conduct calculated to increase the number of our friends, and to diminish the number of our enemies? Was it right, after the Stadtholder had taken refuge in this country, to consider him as Sovereign of Holland, which he never was, to require his consent to the seizure of so much Dutch property? Were such measures conciliatory? Did they tend to promote the interest of the Stadtholder? In the negotiation for peace at Lisle, what was the conduct of Ministers? The negotiation was broken off, because the French refused to allow us to retain, as indemnification for their aggrandizement, the conquests we had made at the expence of the Dutch, who had been involved in the quarrel by our ob-

stinacy and violence. What were the Dutch to think of this proceeding? Smarting under the losses they had sustained, must they not have considered us as gross hypocrites when lately we affected such a zeal for their interests, which, in the instances alluded to, we had rendered so much subservient to our own? If formerly they saw us willing to compensate the conquests of France by retaining all their colonial possessions, could they believe us more disinterested, after having subsidized the forces of Russia, and increased our claims to indemnification by so much additional expenditure?

"These are circumstances which could not fail to produce a powerful impression upon the cool and calculating Dutchman. On entering upon the Expedition for the deliverance of Holland, what means did we employ to efface the prejudice that must have existed against our disinterestedness. Look at the proclamations which were issued on our landing in Holland. Read that distributed by Sir Ralph Abercromby: it holds out to the Dutch, to be sure, delightful visions of future happiness under their antient Government; but it says not a word of the Cape of Good Hope, of Ceylon, of Trincomalee. The gallant Officer by whom it was issued I acquit of any share in the composition. He is not answerable for its policy. But what is its spirit? We address the Dutch, a people cold, considerate, phlegmatic, as if they were a nation of religious fanatics or chivalrous warriors. Religion is dragged in upon all occasions; but why it is so I cannot understand. The French did not interfere with the religion of the Dutch. They do not seem, indeed, to have prevented religious worship in any country where their arms have prevailed; but least of all, had they any temptation to interfere with the poverty and simplicity of the religious institutions of the Dutch? What influence, then, could such topics produce in Holland? Every thing that could have no effect was urged—every thing that might engage them in our favour was omitted. We tell the Dutch to "*Forget and forgive the past.*" But, how will they understand this advice? Will they not consider it as a recommendation to *forget* that they ever had colonies, and to *forgive* us for taking them? The Minister seems to have understood very little of Dutch human nature, if he expected such proclamations to have any success among them. If, instead of all the fine reflections upon religion, social order, and their former Government, he had said we will give you back all your colonies, the argument would have been understood, and the effect might have been favourable. Instead of this, what did we tell them in other terms?—Be a nation without trade; take back your old Government; be a province dependent upon England, through the

Stadtholder. These are the blessings which we promise you, and which you must co-operate with us to obtain.

“ These considerations I have adduced to shew that Ministers had not truly calculated the temper and views of the people of Holland; that they had no reason to flatter themselves with the support of that country; and that they did not pursue the course by which it was to be obtained. It was, to the last degree, arrogant and presumptuous to involve this nation in the expence of such an armament as was employed in the late expedition, upon vain speculations. The right honourable gentleman should not have put his theories of human nature to such a costly experiment. He ought to have done what every wise Statesman should do—act only in matters of such high moment and extensive concern, upon authentic information and upon practical grounds.

“ There is another very material point which I cannot pass unnoticed. After submitting to the sacrifice of so much blood, to such heavy burdens, it is not too much to say that we are entitled to plain dealing; but if the plan proposed had been attended with success, was it the intention of Ministers to establish the old Government of Holland? I confess I have doubts on this subject. It may be recollected, that a noble and vigorous Statesman in another place, in arguing upon the Irish Union, represented the old Government of Holland as feeble, inefficient, incompetent to its own defence, and to any useful exertion, from the want of unity in its Executive Authority. Was it then for the re-establishment of this piece of imbecility, this form of Government incapable of self-defence, incapable of contributing any assistance to its allies, that our blood and treasure was to be applied? Or was it intended to strengthen the Government, to give it the vigour of despotism for the purposes of self-defence and useful alliance? If this was their intention, they meant a usurpation; and I trust that the Stadtholder would have been an unwilling usurper. Can we conceive that they concealed this design, if it was really entertained; if they did not communicate the intention to the partizans of the House of Orange, they were guilty of a shameful fraud in inviting them to contribute to the restoration of the ancient Government, while they were, in fact, to risk their lives and fortunes for a new Constitution. If they did communicate their design to improve the former Government by an infusion of additional strength, were they sure that the Dutch would agree to changes which violated those principles and those forms to which they were obstinately attached? After the differences, then, which subsisted between this country and Holland during the American war; after the experience of the campaigns on the Continent

in which we were engaged along with them against France; after the known views of domestic parties in Holland; after we had forced Holland into the war, and shewed, after all, a desire to indemnify ourselves for the Continental conquests, by the possession of her Colonies; after the grounds of suspicion which existed against our intentions, both with regard to the commercial relations and the political establishments of Holland; had we any reasons to infer a welcome reception, or a cordial co-operation? If their consent made a necessary ingredient in the Expedition, had we such assurance of their favourable disposition, as to justify an enterprise, to the success of which it was essential? Ministers had no right to calculate upon the dispositions of the Dutch. They are guilty, therefore, of having squandered the blood and resources of this country upon a plan, undertaken without due examination, and concerted without a proper attention to the circumstances on which its success necessarily depended.

“Considering the scheme of this Expedition, from its first conception to the period of its execution, we find in it such variation and uncertainty as preclude the supposition that it was embraced and pursued upon any uniform views of policy. The powers of the Hereditary Prince of Orange, given in his proclamation to the Dutch, are dated in December 1798, from which a presumption arises that the plan of the Expedition was in agitation at the time of the first treaty with Russia, which was concluded about that period. The declaration of the Emperor Paul in his “zeal for the cause of Sovereigns” points at this attempt for the deliverance of Holland. If it was *then* planned and agreed that Russian troops should be employed, what was the policy of Ministers? Though they had themselves admitted that the scheme must be a *coup de main*, and that its success depended upon surprise, the landing in Holland was not effected till the 27th of August 1799! It appears that expectations had been formed of inducing Prussia to enter into the common cause against France. In June 1799, however, all hopes of drawing Prussia from her neutrality were abandoned. A treaty is concluded, in which, besides the troops to be employed in other objects, 17,000 Russians are to be employed in the expedition against Holland. The Emperor Paul too, with that magnanimity which characterises all his transactions with this country, agrees to employ some of his own ships to transport the forces to England, upon condition of his being allowed ample indemnification for fitting out the vessels in question for another Expedition. This seems to be the first specific arrangement of the plan, and the management of Ministers in this is likewise singularly conspicuous. At the time when

they expected the co-operation of Prussia, no very precise resolution had been taken respecting the Dutch Expedition. The exertions of the King of Prussia were solicited to promote objects which, as the event shewed, could be attained without his assistance; that design, however, to which he must have been well inclined, and for the success of which his co-operation was essential, was but faintly, if at all, brought into notice. After his determination to remain neutral, Ministers, as if to shew their resentment of his policy, then determined to prosecute with the greatest vigour that plan to which of all others the concurrence of the Prussian Cabinet, and the co-operation of the Prussian forces, were necessary.

“ The landing at Helder was at length effected. I must do justice to the gallant officers employed in the Expedition. No blame whatever attaches to the conduct of the Royal Commander in Chief, or of those who served along with him. The Expedition was planned upon such sanguine calculations of co operation from the inhabitants, that the military efforts were made dependent upon the political views of its authors. The army was sent to Holland as to a friendly country. Its supplies of every kind were arranged upon this presumption. The Duke of York himself, not a Member of the Cabinet, had no means of verifying the calculations upon which the Cabinet Ministers had resolved upon the Expedition. I am aware, Sir, that Parliament does not know such a body as the Cabinet Council. I do not criticise the selection which His Majesty has made of that body, which may be considered as a Committee of that which the Constitution recognizes, the Privy Council. Still I cannot help thinking, that at a moment so critical as the present, the Commander in Chief ought to have been a Member of the Cabinet. The Duke of York was unacquainted with the true state of Holland. His military plans and military conduct must have been accommodated to the political views and political representations of Ministers. In saying that the Duke of York was a proper person to advise His Majesty as a Member of the Cabinet, upon every thing which such an Expedition might require, I repeat only what the public voice has declared of his Royal Highness's honourable, attentive, and meritorious Government of the Army since he has possessed the chief command. To his Royal Highness I impute no blame. He is not responsible for the planning of the enterprise, which, framed as it was, must have influenced so much the military execution. It is on the authors of the scheme that we are to charge the faults of the design, and the disgrace of the catastrophe.

“ The army then went to Holland as a friendly country. A summons was sent by General Abercromby to the Batavian Commander, in a stile of haughty menace, which clearly proved that it was not the production of that gallant and respectable officer. The conduct of Sir Ralph Abercromby on every occasion, his manly and upright proceedings while in Ireland, prove him to be a man not likely to be the author of a production such as that to which I allude. The answer of the Batavian officer was spirited. What a contrast, indeed, between the presumptuous tone with which we addressed the enemy at the beginning, and the ignominious escape we were at length compelled to stipulate for at the termination of the campaign. Ministers say that they cannot make peace with the French Government; that the latter never yet observed any armistice that they concluded. In our own instance we know, by fatal experience, that if we cannot make peace with France, we can make a Convention; we know from the testimony of our own officers, that the enemy can observe an armistice. But what was the case when General Abercromby landed? Did he find the Batavian troops disposed, like the sailors, to surrender without a blow? Did he not meet with the most vigorous resistance, even before any Frenchmen appeared in action, and our very first success was purchased by the loss of a great number of our brave countrymen? How did it happen, that after the landing was effected, no attempt was made to follow up the first advantage? Was General Abercromby prevented by his orders, or by the want of necessaries, from advancing? It is a matter of less importance, indeed, but it tends to explain the want of arrangement in the plan, that the army was for some time destitute of the means of moving forward. It has been positively asserted, that the army was left without baggage-waggons; that they were first cheered with the hope that certain ships in sight contained these waggons, and that afterwards their hopes were damped on being told that the waggons were in some ships, but the wheels were in others? Was it true also, that the want of other means of conveying the bleeding troops from the field of battle had obliged them to have recourse to Dutch schuyts? Surely not one British soldier should have perished through such negligence as this! Was it true that such ignorance prevailed of the roads of Holland, that the waggons which were afterwards employed proved useless? I say, Sir, that no personal consideration ought to shield from inquiry the persons in various situations of contractors, purveyors, &c. to whom these, and similar inconveniences were owing.

“ Between the first landing at the Helder, and the arrival of the

reinforcements under the Duke of York, an opportunity had been given to ascertain the determined resolution of the Batavian army to resist our attempt. French troops were pouring into Holland. Was it not known likewise that the nature of the country afforded means of defence almost insurmountable? Were not all the circumstances which pointed out the certain conclusion, that the Expedition could not be ultimately successful, known previous to the sailing of the Duke of York? If there was not a secret motive for persevering in the Expedition, which no common understanding can suspect, why did not Ministers profit by their experience to avoid farther disaster? If they did not know all these circumstances; they must stand convicted of a negligence no less criminal than the presumption of persisting after so many warnings to desist. On the 10th of September, the French and Batavians, anxious to make an impression on our troops before the arrival of the reinforcements, attacked Sir Ralph Abercromby, but were repulsed by the gallantry of our troops, and the strength of their position. On the 13th, the Duke of York arrived, and on the 19th, an attack was made upon the enemy, which was successful in that part where the British troops were engaged, and unsuccessful on the part of the Russians. Of the behaviour of the latter I shall say but little. If, however, the accounts of their conduct in the villages where they came be true, it would form the ground not merely of inquiry, but of an address to His Majesty. The result of this action was, that the British and Russian forces retreated to their former position.

"Here I must beg the attention of the House to what was passing at home. On the 24th, Parliament was to meet: Ministers had intelligence of this disastrous engagement; they were apprised of the resistance of the Dutch troops, and of the backwardness of the inhabitants to assist our cause: yet, with all these facts in their possession, they made His Majesty come down to Parliament, and express his sanguine hopes of the ultimate success of the Expedition! If, then, Ministers were aware of the true state of our affairs in Holland, a more gross contempt of truth, or more flagrant deception of Parliament, never was practised by any Administration.

"After the action of the 2d October, the army moved forward. This was represented as a great victory; there is every reason to believe, however, that it was a drawn battle. Alkmaar was stated to have opened its gates, as if this had been the act of the inhabitants, and a proof of their friendly disposition. The fact, however, was, that a Lieutenant and some troops having accidentally advanced near the place, found that it was without means of defence, of which he immediately gave information, and the town was occu-

plied by our troops. In his dispatches after the action, his Royal Highness states that it had given him the command of an extent of country, and that the inhabitants would have an opportunity to declare themselves. What was the consequence? The army attempted to advance; an engagement took place on the 6th, in which we claimed the victory: but so little advantageous was the success, that on the 7th, in the evening, the retreat was ordered; the army returned to its old position at Shagen Brug; and this retreat was conducted so precipitately, that 400 women and children were left behind. These the French treated with great propriety; nay, these cruel and perfidious enemies actually clothed the children, and sent them back with the women to the British head-quarters. Thus, at length, instead of the deliverance of the Dutch, the hopes of which we had so sanguinely indulged, the army was compelled to enter into a capitulation for its escape! What a sad and mortifying termination of a plan in which so much exertion had been employed, and so much of our hope had been embarked! I do not censure those by whom it was concluded: I believe, on the contrary, that it was inevitable in the situation in which the army was placed. Yet how painful a reflection! to find that the inducement held out to the enemy to agree to the Convention, was a threat to destroy for ever the means of trade and commerce of that people whom we had gone to save! I am sure that had circumstances made it necessary to proceed to so cruel an alternative, it would have been employed with reluctance. It was a humiliating thing, after such proud expectations, to fail in our design, and fail too amidst such an accumulation of disgrace. Our army left Holland with sentiments of indignation against the Batavians, by whom they conceived themselves injured and deceived; with detestation of their allies, to whose misconduct they imputed the disastrous termination of the campaign; and with increased esteem for the enemy whom they had been taught to abhor.

“Such is the transaction which the House is called upon to investigate. Never was there a case which *prima facie* presented stronger grounds for inquiry. There are moments when it becomes this House to exercise a peculiar jealousy of its reputation. An opinion has gone abroad, that this House has reposed too blind a confidence in Ministers. The rewards which have followed this confidence have thrown more than a suspicion on the purity of the motive. It is necessary, on an occasion like this, to watch their conduct with more than ordinary attention. The public interest which it has excited, the universal regard which the decision of the House will attract, must render it the object of more than common

severity of revision. The suspicion that the Minister has nothing to fear from the controuling vigilance of Parliament, must either be strongly confirmed, or honourably removed. It is not a consequence which any Member need fear from the result of inquiry, that Ministers will be obliged to quit their places. It would be no advantage, doubtless, to shew that the Administration of this country is in the hands of convicted incapacity; but still it would be a far greater evil to prove that Ministers are too powerful for controul; that error is exempted from inquiry, and misconduct secure from censure. The present case should afford a salutary caution to the House how they gave their confidence to Ministers to pursue against France that system of exploded impolicy which has produced such fatal mischief and indelible disgrace. We are at war for the restoration of Bourbons, and for nothing else. All the qualifications with which this proposition is limited are mere quibbles. This is the *sine qua non* to immediate peace. It was stated in the answer of Lord Grenville, that there was a *possibility* of negotiation with the present Government of France; but if it be true, that what is possible is *quod potest esse*, there was no immediate alternative. We were fighting for the restoration of the House of Bourbon. The question resolves itself into three propositions—the people of France must institute a Government which His Majesty's Ministers shall approve, and then submit to prove its stability. In the mean time, this stability is to be ascertained by employing every hostile means to work its overthrow. Bonaparte must show by the evidence of facts, that he is sincere in his desire of peace; while it is the policy of Ministers to employ every effort to disturb his authority, and every insult to provoke his resentment. The only alternative which Ministers were willing to accept as the price of peace, is the unconditional restoration of the House of Bourbon. But if no enlarged view of policy, no dictate of constitutional jealousy can move a British House of Commons to institute the proposed inquiry, they owe it to the reputation of the army, whose conduct has never been censured in this country, but whose honour has been cruelly attacked abroad, to investigate the transaction to the bottom, and lay the blame where it ought to fall. Read the report which has been published in the Petersburg Gazette* of the different actions in

* PETERSBURGH, OCT. 22. (*From the Court Gazette*).—Major-General Hessen, from his head quarters at Zypser Schleusen:

“I humbly acquaint your Imperial Majesty, that, on the 4th of September, I arrived from Yarmouth with the first division of troops before the Texel. We disembarked immediately in row-boats, and landed all

Holland, and say whether you are not called upon to vindicate the character of the British army? Do you feel so little for the military fame of your country, as to suffer your brave soldiers to stand in the face of Europe branded with such a stigma? Do you esteem so little the reputation of the gallant officers employed in Holland, the Duke of York, Sir Ralph Abercromby, Sir James Pulteney, General Dundas, that excellent officer General Moore, and those who served with him, as to allow the aspersions cast upon their renown in the libellous letter of General Hefsen to remain uncontradicted? You owe it to the character of the British nation, to the spirit of your troops, you owe it to the honour of the living; to the memory of the dead, to go into an inquiry, which will distinguish those who have been guilty of misconduct and incurred disgrace. I

our troops on the 6th at the Helder, though in a violent gale of wind. General Hermann was arrived before me, and was at the distance of 35 werstes from the Helder, towards Alkmaer. By his orders I joined him on the 7th; and on the 8th in the morning, at four o'clock, we proceeded in three columns, and attacked the enemy with a bravery only characteristic to your Majesty's subjects. We drove him from three strong entrenchments, took all the batteries with the bayonet, and entered three strong villages, with the town of Bergen. We had already taken fourteen pieces of cannon, about one thousand prisoners, and killed upwards of two thousand of the enemy. However, all our ammunition being exhausted, we could no longer carry on offensive operations against a numerous enemy, who employed all his forces against us, who forced the right wing of our allies, who intended to attack at the same time, but who, from causes unknown to me, were two hours too late, which considerably injured the victory which we had already gained. Lieutenant-General Hermann was made prisoner. I cannot conceal from you, most gracious Sovereign, that the troops of your Majesty are in want of the most necessary articles. I will not, however, pretend to say that this is owing to the want of care of our allies, but rather to their late arrangements, when, contrary to the first plan, they landed all the troops, their own as well as ours, in a crowd, so that it was impossible the small track of ground which we occupied could furnish us with provisions, and we are under the necessity to wait for supplies from England. We were in want of sufficient artillery and horses, and the troops were not yet recovered from a violent sea sickness. Our ammunition being exhausted, we had no means of attack and defence but the bayonet; but through the extreme fatigue of our troops, their retreat began in confusion. The Commander in Chief being a prisoner, Lieutenant-General Scherebzw killed, and Major-General Suthof wounded, the chief command devolved on me. I strove to collect our troops, and retired to our first advantageous position in such a manner that the enemy found it impossible to follow. Our whole loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners, amounts to about 3,000 men; but the enemy has lost many more; the prisoners taken by the English and ourselves amounting to above 3,000 men," &c.

move "That the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House to inquire into the causes of the failure of the late Expedition to Holland."

Mr. DUNDAS afterwards rose, and spoke as follows:—

"Sir, I rise to assign my reasons to the consideration of the House, why I cannot give my consent to the honourable gentleman's motion. In so doing, I shall endeavour to take up as small a portion of their time as I possibly can, though I must beg leave to entreat their attention, while I take notice of the various topics introduced by the honourable gentleman in the course of his very animated and eloquent speech. The honourable gentleman has told us, Sir, that by this motion for an inquiry, he has not in view the smallest censure of His Majesty's Ministers; nor is their removal from their official situations at all the object of his motion. Sir, this may be all very true; but I think I can clearly shew, and in a very few words, what the honourable gentleman's object is, and I will endeavour to define it. But previous to this, I shall only remark, that many of the topics which the honourable gentleman has brought forward in the course of his speech for an Inquiry into the Expedition to Holland, such topics I shall not have occasion to go over in detail. Many topics also which are usually brought forward upon occasions of a similar nature to this, were omitted by the honourable gentleman, in the course of his speech to-night. It has been usual for gentlemen who move for inquiries into expeditions, to profess that they feel it necessary, in vindication of the honour of the country, to express a resentment against Ministers for the crimes they have committed; and to expose their incapacity, as it has been sometimes called, and to state their unfitness for the offices they fill, by way of clearing a passage for their removal: For it is not unfair to urge the necessity of removing those who are incapable of performing their duty. These are commonly held out as the objects of inquiry into expeditions, or into any other subjects which are to be imputed to His Majesty's Ministers as the effect of their counsel. This is a course which the honourable gentleman has not followed. On the contrary, he disclaims the idea of following up the success of his motion for inquiry, should he succeed, with any motion for the removal of His Majesty's Ministers. And now for the honourable gentleman's object. It is not many nights since those with whom that honourable gentleman agrees in political sentiments, exerted their powers to prevail upon this House to refuse to continue the war against France. Their attempts were made with all the vigour and animation which men usually employ when they are in earnest, and consider themselves in

the right. The House heard them with attention—considered their arguments with candour, and decided that we should not, at present, enter into a negotiation with France; but conveyed an opinion to the world that we thought the war should be carried on with vigour. What then does the honourable gentleman propose to this House? Not that His Majesty's Ministers should be removed, but that the House should deprive them of all confidence in the country, and, of course, of all vigour for carrying on the war; that is not, indeed, the language of his motion, but it would be the effect of it, if the motion were successful; for it would be the cause of withdrawing from them the confidence of this House, which must cripple, if not altogether stop them, in the progress of the war. I know not what might be said to be the object; but I know that this would be the effect of the honourable gentleman's succeeding in the motion now before the House. That being the only effect of the success of his motion, the honourable gentleman will not be surprized if I take another view of the question now before you; and, before I proceed to any other matter, state what was the object of the late expedition to Holland—then proceed to the consideration of other topics, namely, wherein it has succeeded, wherein it has failed, and to what that failure is owing; or in other words, why that expedition was not completely successful, according to the objects which His Majesty's Ministers had in view, when the plan of it was adopted. This is the course which I intend pursuing in this discussion; and there are many parts of the speech of the honourable gentleman which I will not enter upon in the detail, some of which applied to a supposed alliance between the Courts of Austria, Russia, and Great Britain. The honourable gentleman made some mistakes upon that subject, as to the manner in which that alliance was endeavoured to be enforced. I mention these things only cursorily, because they have no real bearing on the subject now before the House. I admit to him, we wished for the aid of Russian troops in the late expedition. I admit that we thought their assistance essential: I go farther, and say, I think it essential to the interest of this Country and of Europe, that a good understanding should be kept up between this Country and Russia; and therefore, if the honourable gentleman intended to provoke me into a disquisition that shall call in question, or tend to lessen the cordiality that at present subsists between Great Britain and Russia, the honourable gentleman must be totally disappointed; and if, in any part of the inquiry which is proposed by this motion, there was likely to be introduced even a suggestion that might tend to create any misunderstanding between this Country and Russia, or any

thing to create a jealousy between their armies; that would be, with me, a strong reason for opposing this motion. Having dismissed this part of the subject, I shall now state the object of the expedition to Holland. It was to rescue Holland from the tyranny of the French yoke—an object which has never ceased to operate upon the councils of this country ever since Holland was over-run. But to come more closely to the point—I admit, that from the Spring of last year it was an object which attracted the particular attention of His Majesty's Ministers in a particular manner, and determined upon. I shall farther admit, that this determination on our part, upon an expedition to Holland, was known to the French Government; and this appears by several authentic papers of theirs, whereby it is stated they knew that preparations were going forwards, which rendered it proper for them to reinforce their army in other quarters, and that they particularly thought they should do so in Holland. Having said this, I shall now proceed, according to my promise, to state the object of the expedition. It was threefold—First, to rescue the United Provinces, from the tyranny of the French—Secondly, to add to the efficient force of this country, and to diminish that of the enemy, by getting possession of the Dutch fleet, so as to render it of no use to the enemy, by whom it was kept with a view of aiding that enemy in a plan for a descent on some part of His Majesty's dominions.—Thirdly, to endeavour, as far as we could, to divert the enemy from its projected pursuits in general, by hostile operations in Holland on our part, thereby to defeat the plans of the enemy in the course of the campaign, whether they chose to remain in Holland or not.—These three different objects were in contemplation when the expedition was agreed on; and there was, give me leave to say, a great probability, at that time, that all the three objects would be successful; two of them did succeed, and only one of them failed, and for which I shall shortly assign to you a sufficient reason. I shall now proceed to state what I feel with regard to the first part of the general object which I have already stated to be threefold—I mean that of rescuing the United States from the galling yoke of the French tyranny.—I should have thought it was hardly necessary to argue, in this House, on the wisdom and policy of rescuing Holland from that yoke. I should at any time have thought this a point which it was unnecessary to argue, for that it must at all times have been felt in this country as a great national object. This, indeed, was admitted by the honourable gentleman himself, who, by the way, accompanied it with a little affectation of candour; for he was pleased to bestow some praise on what he called the wisdom and policy of

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His Majesty's Ministers, for rescuing Holland from the tyranny of the French. I thought, that as he set out with this as a matter of praise to His Majesty's Government, he intended to follow a course different from that which he did follow ; but I was a little surprised, indeed I was almost astonished, to find him directly wheel about, and then make a very able and eloquent address, the obvious purpose of which was to tell Holland this story : ' However wise it was in ' Great Britain to endeavour to rescue you, be you aware of the ' English—who are they ? They are those who endeavoured to ' destroy you in the course of the American war. They take your ' possessions, but they will never restore them to you. If ever ' they shall hereafter remove the French yoke from off your necks, ' I warn you against such friends : Be on your guard against them. ' This is my advice to you as a British Senator.'—This is the substance of the language of the honourable gentleman, and it was founded on transactions which took place during the American war ; and the honourable gentleman ought to have recollected, that all these atrocious grievances by which it has pleased him to tarnish the character of his country, and of which he so kindly reminds Holland, were committed before the year 1787 ; and yet during that year this country was successful in bringing about a Revolution in Holland, which the honourable gentleman recommended highly. This I take leave to call an answer to much of the reasoning of the honourable gentleman upon this part of the subject, and, what is best of all, an answer from himself. Why did the Dutch submit to that Revolution ? Why did you interfere to accomplish it ? To rescue Holland from the yoke of the House of Bourbon. Was it more criminal in us to attempt to rescue the same Provinces from the yoke of the French Republic ? Or was it more criminal in us to attempt the same thing, as was endeavoured by the King of Prussia, and finally accomplished ; I mean the rescuing Holland from the tyranny of the House of Bourbon ? The honourable gentleman admits the propriety of interfering to prevent the tyranny of the House of Bourbon ; but allows no such attempt to be made against the French Republic. In the one case, Prussia did that in concert with Great Britain which the honourable gentleman applauds. In the other, Great Britain attempts the same thing alone, which the honourable gentleman condemns. Where am I to look for the honourable gentleman's real sentiments, either that Holland should be rescued or not ? I say, I wish to rescue Holland from the tyranny of France ; whether Monarchical France, or Republican, is to me no object. I say it is the policy of this country to rescue Holland from the gripe of France ; and this is no new policy in this

country: it was adopted by the wisest politicians of this country, from the earliest period of its connection with Holland, down to the present time. To prove this, I will read what has been laid down as the creed of this country with regard to its connection with Holland; and it is as far back as the year 1585, when a State Paper was published, well known in the history of this country, and, indeed, in the history of Europe—it relates to the relative interests of Holland and this country, and was penned by Cecil, Minister to Queen Elizabeth; the substance of which is, that Queen Elizabeth thought it the policy of England to give assistance to the Dutch, and to prevent their being overpowered by the Spaniards. It is under three distinct heads: First, The Deliverance of the Dutch from the War with the Spaniards. Secondly, That all Christian People in the choice of their Religion should be free. Thirdly, That the People of Holland and the Low Countries shall enjoy their Commerce and Intercourse, as between the Queen's Progenitors and the People of the Low Countries, &c. was observed. This was the policy of the time of Queen Elizabeth, and we see that Queen Elizabeth interfered in favour of the Dutch against the Spaniards. It was then thought, that if the Low Countries were not in the hands of the Dutch, the commerce of all Europe, and particularly of this country, would be materially injured. This was a policy which was never lost sight of during the whole of the long reign of that illustrious Princess. King William followed exactly the same policy, and it has been observed uniformly during the reign of the House of Brunswick; a policy that was never called in question by any administration that was esteemed for its wisdom, since the days of Elizabeth, as I have already stated to you. I merely refer to this document, the authenticity, as well as state policy of which has long been received in the general history of Europe, to shew how long this policy had obtained. I, therefore, need not dwell upon the proposition—"That it is the interest of this country not to suffer Holland to be under the yoke of France."

"There are, indeed, exceptions to this policy in this country, in the reign of King James, under some bad Administrations; but no good politician has ever doubted of the imprudence of that counsel, during the better part of the last century, and up to the present time. I flatter myself, therefore, I need not say any more to carry the House along with me in this proposition, "that if there was any prospect of success, the object of rescuing the Dutch from the French yoke, was an object worth pursuit." The next object I have to take notice of is, that of our taking possession of the

Dutch fleet, to diminish the power of Holland, or rather to diminish the power of France; and indeed I did not expect, even from the versatility of the honourable gentleman, any thing like a dispute of this doctrine; or that there should have been any thing like a doubt cast upon the great value of the accomplishment of this part of the expedition. But the honourable gentleman seems to hesitate upon the value of it; in which, however, he has the candour to confess he is singular in his opinion.—What has the Dutch fleet been destined to for the greater part of this war? For more than one half of it, they have been supposed to be destined to the employment of carrying into effect the threatened invasion of the Northern and Eastern part of the coast of this country. I never heard of any body doubting but the French intended making use of the Dutch fleet for the purpose of making that attempt; and although I never felt any alarming apprehensions on that subject, yet I do not think that depriving your enemy of the possibility of making even the attempt, is a trifling object; and the honourable gentleman cannot forget what was apprehended some time ago upon this point in the north of Ireland. We have heard it frequently said, that if any hostile fleet appeared on our Northern coast in Ireland, it could come no where but from the Texel—is it therefore nothing to extinguish all hope of the enemy upon this subject?—Besides, we took between 6 and 7,000 seamen of the Dutch, all of whom were liable, at any time, by requisition or other force, to be employed in the service of the French fleet. We took also 40,000 tons of shipping belonging to the enemy, which might have annoyed our commerce. Viewing these things as they really are, that the Dutch fleet was one of the objects of the expedition; I say, therefore, that great, material, and essential service was performed to this country by that expedition.—We have transferred the Dutch fleet from the Dutch to the English coast; so far, therefore, I say, that the expedition has obtained complete success. A third object of the expedition was, that this country should co-operate in the general plan against the enemy, a plan in which we and all our allies were equally engaged, and on which it was our duty, as well as interest, to do every thing in our power. I believe I am not saying too much when I say it was a question with France, for a while, whether it was better for her to use much of her strength to prevent us from recovering Holland, or that she should use all her power to reinforce her armies in different parts of Europe? She at last determined to reinforce her power in Holland. Does the honourable gentleman mean to say, that her withdrawing from the general plan of the campaign 40,000 of her men, was not withdrawing, in the first

place, in conjunction with the Dutch fleet, all chance of an attack upon our own coast? Was it not making a great diversion of their force, and so far disappointing their scheme? I say, that this expedition kept them in a state of suspense with regard to the distribution of the force, of which we felt the beneficial effects in the course of the campaign, in various parts of Europe. What was the case at the battle of Novi? The House remembers the particulars of that battle, and therefore I need not recite them. I shall only observe, that it was the most bloody, as well as the most doubtful, between the Austrians and the French, in the whole campaign, and it was the cause or foundation of the recovery of all Italy from the grasp of the French Republic; it decided the fate of Tortona and Coni. If this be so, I would ask, whether this success would have taken place, on the part of the allies, if the expedition to Holland had not taken place? Nor is this all: the effect was also felt at Suabia, after which the Archduke was enabled to proceed with vigour against the French. Or if you take notice of Massena in Switzerland, you will see the advantage the allies have gained; and this, I say again, is an illustration of the advantages you have gained by this expedition to Holland; for I say they are to be ascribed to the necessity to which the French were driven to employ 40,000 of their men to reinforce their power in Holland. It has given decision to the Imperial arms almost all over Europe; at Novi, at Suabia, at Tortona, at Coni, and at Philipsburgh. I have stated that the object of the campaign, or of the expedition to Holland, was three-fold; I have stated that two of the objects out of the three were completely successful; that it was the object of the expedition to assist our allies, and to transfer the power of the enemy in the ports of Holland to the ports of this country, by which the French are completely deprived of the co-operation of the Dutch fleet. The honourable gentleman says, that this was no great gain to us; because the seamen in the Dutch fleet were not well affected to the Government under which they were stationed; and he assigns as a proof of it, that they rose against their officers; but when I recollect that this was the very fleet that fought Lord Duncan, I think that much could not be built upon their disaffection, if we had to fight them, besides that their mutinous disposition was not to be depended upon; and I am sure this country would have acted a very unwise part, if it did not take care that their dispositions, whatever they are, should be secured in our ports, instead of being in the ports of Holland. The next question is, whether we could have had any chance of releasing Holland from the tyranny of France, in case the French had followed the plan of the campaign formerly

adopted by them in the different parts of Europe? Now, upon that subject, I do say, that the French could not have prevented our recovering Holland, if they had not made such prodigious reinforcements in Holland; and it was a matter of great doubt what policy the French would adopt at the moment our expedition was undertaken; whether they would reinforce the power in Holland, or employ all their means of reinforcement in other parts of the Continent, for the purposes of the campaign. They adopted that of reinforcing their power in Holland; the result of which was, that we were not able to recover and rescue the United Provinces from the French yoke: but that was only one part of the result; another part of it was, that the French lost every other point which they contested in the whole campaign all over Europe. Now, as to the good which would arise from the inquiry which the honourable gentleman proposes, I shall expressly state my opinion to the House and to the Public at large, without the least apprehension of offending either; which is, that I am perfectly well satisfied, and the honourable gentleman himself knows it, that any inquiry into this matter must be defective, for any useful purpose of information, without exposing every thing with regard to Holland. It is impossible for us to vindicate ourselves in the shape of an inquiry, because it is absolutely impossible for us to produce the grounds of intelligence on which the expedition was founded. I do not mean to state, nor do I desire to have it understood, that we did not proceed on intelligence that rendered it proper in us to act as we did; but I do mean to say, that the publication of the whole of that intelligence would be highly improper at this moment, in many respects, and might be highly injurious to the interests of Europe to disclose; and to disclose the intelligence partially would be worse than doing nothing. It is for the House to say, whether it will desire us to make that disclosure. I state it without any apprehension of any displeasure, either of this House or of the Public; I, for one, shall never concur in advising His Majesty to order that there be laid before this House any such information as this motion seeks to obtain. The honourable gentleman says, the people of Holland were not favourable to us in the object of our expedition—How he can draw that conclusion I cannot say, and I beg leave to annalyse his proposition. He says they manifested no signs of their feelings towards us, nor against the French. A people may have a general feeling, and yet they may not take arms to carry that feeling into effect, until they see that those who come to relieve them are secure of success. But I am only concurring with almost all mankind, in thinking that the crews of the navy of Holland were disaffected to the Government

of France, or to those who were acting under its power and influence. The whole fleet of Holland was indisposed to the Government of the country in which they were, according to the admission of the honourable gentleman himself, and that goes a great way towards the probability that the people of Holland had the same feeling. I take it that the feelings of 6 or 7,000 Dutch seamen, connected as they must be by marriage and consanguinity with the people of Holland, may be taken as a tolerable sample of the feelings of the whole country; nor was any attempt made to drive off the cattle, or other provisions, from the use of the British troops. It may be said, that as our army had money, the Dutch did not wish to remove their goods from the market of such good customers as our men were; but I take it that this is a strong proof there was no disposition towards it.

“These, however, are points upon which, if we argue at all, we must argue on presumption; for there can be no positive proof of the fact. If I were at liberty to give up all confidential communication on this matter, against which I protest, I think I could convince this House that the disposition of the Dutch was not unfavourable to us. The honourable gentleman might say, this was only proof of the disposition of some of them, and no proof with regard to the rest. I admit we had no means of knowing the disposition of the Dutch to a man; for we could not call a General Assembly there to collect their sentiments; but I go, as my right honourable friend went on a former occasion, upon the general feeling of human nature, however the honourable gentleman may affect to ridicule that text; I say that general feeling teaches me no body of men would continue under the tyranny of the French, if they could help it. I think a man does not argue very badly when he argues, that a country which has been for a considerable time under that Government, would not remain under it longer than they could help it. Am I speaking upon general supposition only?—I appeal to all Italy; to all the South of Europe; for notwithstanding the oath of fidelity of the various states which have been under the arms of France, yet it appears plainly that they were worried and goaded, and tired under their yoke, so that they hailed the Austrians as their deliverers, when they came. Why then am I to presume that the Dutch had not the same feelings? They have been pretty well squeezed by the French. A Dutchman's last shilling has been sweated down almost to a sixpence. Am I then to suppose that the feeling of a Dutchman is different from the feeling of the rest of mankind; or that he has less attachment to his property than that of any other man? Am I, against the experi-

ence of all the world; to say, that a Dutchman is not tied of a Government under which he is not allowed to keep a shilling? I leave the House to consider this question of presumption, that the Dutch would, if they had an opportunity, have every disposition to shake off the yoke of France; and then to determine whether His Majesty's Ministers are to be censured for presuming thus far upon the Dutch character.

"This leads me to another part of the subject; I do not know whether the honourable gentleman expects that we should lay before the House the instructions given to Commanders; I am of opinion that no such instructions can, with any propriety, come before this House. I will tell the honourable gentleman why; for notwithstanding the awful warning he gives this House if it continues to confide in His Majesty's Ministers, I shall state my opinion freely — I am not sure it will never come to be the part of the wisdom and policy of this country again to attempt the recovery of Holland. This is what that honourable gentleman may, if he pleases, tell the country, with all the force of his voice, and with all the eloquence he can employ upon the subject. Another reason with me against giving the instructions to the Commanders is this, that from the very nature of the thing, the instructions must contain much conditional matter — that, for instance, in one condition or posture of affairs, a commander is to act in a given manner, in another posture or condition of things, he is to act possibly the reverse of it. I ask then, would it be wise that we should expose the future prospect of the war, and the plan of our future operations; for that, to a given extent, would be the result of giving up these instructions. These are points which hitherto the wisdom of Parliament have entrusted to the discretion of His Majesty's Government; it is for the House to say whether a different shall now be adopted. Having said this by way of objection to the principle of this motion, I shall now proceed to shew you that this expedition was wisely undertaken. When this expedition was first formed, I think the honourable gentleman asked, why it was not done at an earlier period? To which I answer, we had no army to do it with; the force was collected from all parts of the kingdom, and the most considerable part of it was collected from Ireland. The honourable gentleman himself would hardly have thought it wise to have proceeded in this expedition before the French fleet had sailed from the Mediterranean, should it been possible. Sir Ralph Abercrombie sailed on the 17th of August. It speaks for itself, that the object of that first part of the expedition was that of a mere preliminary; it was to secure a communication between this country and Hol-

land. No man, I presume, will think that an unwise precaution; at this time we had the prospect of a very large and powerful force from Russia; we had also a large army out of the militia: at first we had only the force of 10,000 men, but there was the prospect of a large and powerful co-operation. It was settled that the Helder was the place of landing; accordingly Sir Ralph Abercromby sailed for that place on the 13th of August.

"On the 13th and 14th of August, which I remember to be on Tuesday and Wednesday, a more prosperous commencement was never known—it promised the most rapid success: but it did so happen, that late on the Wednesday night, or early on the Thursday morning, about one o'clock—I heard it! and well do I remember it!—there came on the most extraordinary hurricane that ever blew from the heavens!—In this situation it was totally impossible to land on any part of the coast of Holland; and this continued, with the exception of one day only, until the 27th of the month, before which it was impossible to land a single soldier on the coast of Holland. There was, indeed, some moderate weather on the 21st; so much so, that Sir Ralph Abercromby and Admiral Mitchel anchored off the Helder; but on the following morning, the same hurricane returned, so that no fleet could possibly approach the enemy's shores. What was the effect of all this? It was that of enabling every body on the enemy's shore to know where we must land; the consequence was, that the troops of the enemy came in shoals to that part of the coast, to oppose the landing of our force. Had they been able to land, as was first calculated they might, they would not have been opposed by 1200 men: this I know; but soon after it was known where we were to land, and where for so many days we could not land, troops were collected in great numbers to oppose us. Upwards of 7000 men were collected to oppose us; so that Sir Ralph Abercromby could not land his men to advantage; in truth, his landing was opposed by a superior force in point of numbers. Sir Ralph Abercromby and Admiral Mitchel had determined not to stay longer than the 26th, on account of the want of water, and from other circumstances; it so happened, however, that they could not sooner land. This was a trying scene!—The ardour of the men, the zeal and gallantry of the Commander, which were never excelled on any occasion, were put to the severest trial! At last, they landed on the 27th; but without the power of landing with them a single field-piece; and indeed without any thing but their muskets and bayonets; and yet they did land against cavalry and artillery, and make their landing good! Then I say that, contrary to the com-

mon chances of war, and events in general calculation, this landing was made good, and by it the Dutch fleet was secured. I state these things chiefly to shew how easy it is for men to treat both soldiers and their commanders unjustly, upon an expedition depending upon the temper of the elements; without taking into calculation the state of such elements, and by judging headlong by the event. The honourable gentleman says, the troops had no horses to draw their waggons. They had no waggons; and could not possibly land them under such circumstances, if they had intended it. But he will recollect, that instantly on their landing they did not want them; for all they had immediately to do was to secure a landing place, and a port of communication. Till the first of September, Sir Ralph Abercromby had to consider what position he should take, until a re-inforcement should arrive. There is no complaint against Sir Ralph Abercromby for the disposition of his army; he judged extremely wisely. I have already stated, that the delay arose from causes which no human wisdom could foresee, and therefore could not prevent. Sir Ralph Abercromby, had he been able to land when he expected, would not only have struck the brilliant stroke he did! But, in all human probability, have commanded complete success to all the objects of the expedition. Yet he could not make his landing good until the 27th. That is not to be imputed either to the want of prudence in His Majesty's Ministers, the want of skill in the Commander, or to the want of ardour in the troops; they all did every thing they could, and they could not command the wind and waves. Indeed, I happened to ask a gallant Admiral, whether he thought there was a chance of a tempest to spoil the expedition; when, in a stile which is peculiar perhaps to the profession to which he belongs, and to which he does honour, he answered me with perfect contempt,—“A hurricane in the month of August! or any tempest to prevent our landing within three days on the coast of Holland, if we sailed with a fair wind, was perfectly ridiculous!” However, it happened most unfortunately that my supposition, improbable as it was, was realized! It happened also, that the very same wind which prevented our landing on the coast of Holland, prevented the Russian troops from arriving to reinforce ours! But the honourable gentleman has stated, that His Majesty's Ministers knew, on the 2d of September, from the Commander abroad, that there was no chance of success. The best answer to that assertion is the public letter of Sir Ralph Abercromby himself, which is in these words:—“I hope that the Duke of York, with all the forces that can be

"spared, will arrive immediately; should that be the case, we
"have a reasonable prospect to winter on the Waal."

"This letter is dated on the 4th of Sept.; so that the disaster which the honourable gentleman says we ought to have dreaded on the 2d, was not even so much as apprehended on the 4th, in Holland, by Sir Ralph Abercromby himself! Sir, the Duke of York arrived in Holland on the 13th of September. It is, I have no doubt, in the recollection of every one, that during all the months of August, September, and October, the weather was most unfavourable to military operations; the dreadful state of our crops gave us a melancholy remembrance of this! The Russians, delayed as they had been by the same stormy weather, did not land till the 18th. The Duke of York, on the 19th, offered the Russian General D'Herman to delay the attack, which was intended to be made, if he thought his troops were not sufficiently recovered from the fatigues of their voyage; but General D'Herman earnestly requested the attack might be made, and did it with an arduous alacrity and promptitude which reflected the highest honour upon him. This ardour, however, led that General to the field full two hours sooner than the time appointed! The army was, however, completely successful till a late hour in the day. Even General D'Herman and his troops were in complete possession of the village of Bergen, and crowned with victory, till his ardour led him beyond a given point, and turned the fate of the day!

"When the attack, Sir, was made on Sir Ralph Abercromby, on the 10th of August, the French army amounted to seven and the Dutch to twelve thousand men, which was a superior force to his. Yet our gallant troops fought and beat them with a bravery that did them the highest honour. They did the same on the 19th and on the 2d of October. Between the 2d of October and 6th of that month, French reinforcements continually arrived, and day after day for some time. The Duke of York was then invited by General Abercromby, and all the other Generals and Officers of his army, to accede to the terms of armistice, which were, by that time, mutually wished!—The Officers, I believe, Sir, volunteered their advice; but not till after the 2d of October, to fall back to the first strong position. The Duke of York yielded to this advice; and in so doing, it is my opinion that His Royal Highness consulted the interests and happiness of his whole army! and acted, in every respect, according to the true dictates of reason and humanity! And here, once for all, allow me to advert to those various parts of the honourable gentleman's speech, in which he bestowed many encomiums on the character of the Commander in Chief! Upon

those parts of the honourable gentleman's speech, I need say nothing more, than that every thing he has said, is richly deserved by the object of his praise! I am sure I say so, with equal sincerity; and certainly with much more means of judging than the honourable gentleman possesses! Sir, the honourable gentleman has said a great deal of the disgrace which attached to the end of the expedition; but, for my part, I can see nothing disgraceful in it. When I received the letter, informing me of what had taken place on the 6th of October, I did not lose an hour to advise the King to send an immediate approbation of the steps which had been pursued. Where, Sir, I ask, is the disgrace? It must consist of something arising out of their conduct; and than that nothing could be more praiseworthy or deserving of admiration. I will venture to say, Sir, that no nation was ever more struck with the gallantry of our troops, than the French soldiers themselves who fought against them! Our army returned home with as much gallantry, bravery, and honour, as when they first entered Holland. This army, when in Holland, consisted of 25,000 men; it is now increased to 50,000, all made of the same materials. I think, Sir, the Duke of York was perfectly right in signing the convention; nor could he be wrong in giving up 8000 lumber of French troops—from our overloaded prisons. These he readily surrendered; but did not recede from any one article in which national honour was concerned! He resisted with firmness and indignation every proposition for the delivering back the fleet! These are the true and characteristic features of the question. The Duke of York, Sir, was perfectly sensible, that the taking possession of the Dutch fleet, was one of the chief objects of the expedition. And, in my mind, his bringing off the army in the manner he did, was a transaction characteristic of a manly mind! He agreed to a Convention, by which he drew himself out of a dilemma. There could be no disgrace attending the transaction. His character, and that of his whole Army and Officers, now stand as high as ever! The honourable gentleman has attempted to influence the minds and feelings of the House by the consequences which this expedition led to; by the quantity of British blood that has been shed, and the immense treasure that has been expended on the occasion. I shall add a few more observations. The honourable gentleman has stated that expence to be at a sum not less than six or seven millions; a sum equivalent to the Income Tax, at a tenth part of the national income; but in this he is by no means correct. I suppose he intended it as a figure of eloquence. However, this matter may be easily known; there is no occasion to leave it to the exaggeration of doubt and conjecture.

And it will appear so, from the abstract I shall make, in informing the honourable gentleman what that sum really is—it is 1,142,000*l.*; and considering this expenditure, even on the grounds of national policy, computing, by debtor and creditor, there could, in commercial consideration, be no objection to it. Taking it up in this view, I have a right to consider the ships that were taken, and to state the reduction for the maintenance of a fleet in the North Seas, to check a Dutch fleet. If you take the value of the Dutch fleet, the decrease of expence in the maintenance of the North-Sea fleet, and the saving in the pay of ten thousand seamen voted less than last year, I think, Sir, I may be allowed to say, the balance is greatly in our favour. In the article of prisoners, Sir, what have we given up? Why, 8000 French troops; in lieu of which we have gained 6,000 Dutch seamen to man our fleets, which, whether they fought under Orange or English colours, would be found a great addition and acquisition to the strength of our navy. Again I repeat it, that the vote for the navy is 10,000 men less than last year, which comes into the account, on fair computation, and we gave up 8,000 French prisoners, whom we annually fed at a great expence. The objects gained by the expedition were, the ships, the reduction of expences, and the great diversion in the French forces, which facilitated the victories of the combined armies. What the honourable gentleman stated on the loss of British lives, was an address very powerful to the feelings of the House. I shall not outrage, Sir, the feelings of the House, in addressing myself to them on this topic, as to men. I shall not make it a topic of eloquence. I lament, in common, the calamities of war! but as inseparable from such a condition, I cannot but consider them as arising from the situation of a great nation fighting for great objects; and there is no soldier, landed on that coast, I am sure, that would not consider it as a libel, if I counted on such an event as less probable, less certain, than the event determined. If at war, we must lay our account upon it. But the honourable gentleman has endeavoured to work upon our feelings for the army. The honourable gentleman has requested the House to attend to this. I hope, Sir, I feel as properly as any one for the brave soldiers who compose our Army; but I know, at the same time, that in war no great and important objects can be obtained, without the loss of many dear and valuable connections! And in such a war as this, fighting for our very existence, as a great and independent empire; while we copiously shed the liberal tear of feeling, let us not unnerve, by that tear, the gigantic arm of national defence! It has been said the expedition was attended with the

loss of 10,000 lives. Those who had spread the report of the expence being five millions, might well be expected to exaggerate the other in an equal proportion. But, Sir, I would not wish it should go abroad that this expedition cost 10,000 men. The expedition was, on estimate, taken at the expence of five millions, and the loss of men at 10,000. To remove this impression, the best way would be to state what the loss was really. I shall now state, in detail, the returns made during the whole of the campaign.

Sick and wounded admitted into the hospitals	-	4,088
Sent home out of these	-	2,993
The whole, who died, amounted only to	-	185
And the whole of the killed to	-	846

As to the returns, they were made up in a hurry, and of course subject to misrepresentation; and many, reported to be dead, were afterwards found upon their legs, and well.—But should any gentleman wish to be farther informed, he may be satisfied by applying to Mr. Young, the gentleman who superintended the hospital. And I ought not to name that gentleman, without saying, that there is no praise, or reward, to which he is not entitled. It must give every gentleman of feeling much real satisfaction to be undeceived on this point, when he can fairly substitute, in the place of 10,000 slain, only, at most, the comparatively small number of 846, down to the 1st of February. This is a list certainly sufficient to excite the sensation of sorrow and regret in every feeling bosom, but which I have the satisfaction of adding, fell infinitely short of the injurious report so industriously circulated. I shall repeat, that no man could possibly feel more mortified at the death of every soldier than myself; but I am confident our British heroes would feel indignant, if, in a question of the first national importance, individual loss was suffered to weigh against the general interests of the country!—Upon a review, therefore, of the whole affair, I must object to all public military criticism on any part of military operations. This was a consideration which did not fall, in any shape, within the scope of the honourable gentleman's charge. I feel it my duty to resist a Motion of Inquiry, which could not be productive of any actual benefit; at the same time, that it might considerably clog and harass the measures of Government."

Mr. BOUVERIE said, that none of the arguments which had fallen from the right honourable gentleman could convince him of the impropriety of the motion of his honourable friend. An inquiry certainly should be instituted into the causes of the failure of the Expedition to Holland. After the constitutional force of the country had been demolished to fit it out, it had failed with circumstances

particularly disgraceful to the British name. Was it not the duty of the House to insist upon investigating the business, and ascertaining whether blame was to be attached to the projectors of the Expedition, or to those to whom the execution of it had been entrusted? But the right honourable Secretary said, we had no right to make inquiry, and that, for his own part, he would advise His Majesty not to lay the requisite papers before the House—and why? because a second enterprise of the same nature might be set on foot. He would not call for any papers which it was improper to make public; but he would not consent to a shameful compromise when the honour of the country was at stake. An investigation could give no just ground for complaint to our allies, and could be objected to at home only by those who are conscious that it will not turn out in their favour.

Mr. TIERNEY.—“The speech of the right honourable gentleman who opposed the motion for an Inquiry, appeared to me one of the most extraordinary that I had ever heard in this House; but no part of it surprised me so much as that in which he objected to an investigation taking place, because it might offend our allies, the Russians. He said, that were we rigorously to scrutinize their conduct, and to throw any blame upon it, we should excite jealousies betwixt them and ourselves, and thus hurt the cause we had jointly undertaken to support. If, when a treaty with Russia was first concluded, or before this enterprise was begun, a measure had been proposed which might lead to something harsh being said of the Russians, and to jealousies being excited betwixt the two nations, the right honourable gentleman might have opposed it with some shew of reason. But these jealousies already exist; each party defends itself, and ascribes the failure of the enterprise to the misconduct of the other. An inquiry into the true state of the affair, by taking away all opportunity for groundless recrimination, and fixing blame where blame is due, is the only way to restore cordiality between them. Our brave army, who suffered so much, have a right to insist upon an inquiry. The Russian General casts the most foul imputations upon them. He writes to his Sovereign, that his men were in want of every thing; that they were led into battle, when from sickness they were completely unable to fight; and that an important engagement was lost, by the English being two hours behind the appointed time in beginning the attack. He thus slanders in the face of Europe the conduct of the British army; and an inquiry is the only method by which the falsity of his allegations can be proved, his aspersions wiped off, and the faultless conduct of our countrymen displayed to the world. The right honourable gentleman

himself had blamed the Russian General for getting us into the scrape ; yet he obstinately sets his face against an inquiry, and pledges himself to dissuade His Majesty from laying before the House the papers necessary to its taking place. Is this to be endured, when another Expedition is talked of ; when the Russians are kept that they may again act with us on the Continent in the spring ? Is it too much to call for inquiry when both sides break out into mutual accusations, and when both sides must be eager that their conduct should be examined ? No bad consequences can follow from it—it must be desirable to all concerned, and productive of the greatest advantages to the country. For this glorious Expedition, which has neither been disastrous nor expensive, which has been rather lucrative in a commercial point of view, and which has raised our military character, the right honourable gentleman stated that the grounds were threefold. Its first object was to gain possession of the Dutch fleet. This, I believe, was an object of it, but a very subordinate one, one of infinitely less importance than the right honourable gentleman represents it. It is never once mentioned in the treaty concluded with the Emperor Paul, where the grand plan of the Expedition is delineated. We might think it a very convenient thing if we should be able to rescue these ships from the power of our enemies ; but the sole object of the Emperor of Russia certainly was, to restore the Stadtholder to the Government of the United Provinces. The second ground on which the Expedition was undertaken was, the deliverance of Holland from the yoke of France. The third, the making a diversion in favour of our allies. A diversion may often be attended with excellent effects, and perhaps this one was of service. But the right honourable gentleman can surely claim little merit from saving an Austrian army by the loss of a British one. What, however, are the benefits which resulted to the allies from our landing on the coast of Holland ? We are told that it operated at Novi. I wonder it is not said that it was the cause of the capture of Seringapatam. But, Sir, this battle was fought on the 15th of August, and on the 10th of September there was scarcely a French soldier in Holland. General Massena defeated the Austrians at a time when our troops were on the Continent ; and when the supplies were sent him which had been assisting the Dutch, he was unable to make much greater progress. Thus, though the right honourable gentleman has stated, that out of three objects proposed in the Expedition two have been gained, it appears that one only has been successfully pursued. I formerly stated, that I thought the taking of the Dutch fleet creditable to Ministry ; but I likewise then gave it as my opi-

nion, that we should have been contented with that acquisition, and have proceeded no farther. The predictions I then delivered, have been mournfully fulfilled. The fleet that we have gained we cannot employ; it surrendered to us only from the hope of soon serving under the Stadtholder; and I refer it to any honourable gentleman, if the sailors did not testify the utmost dissatisfaction upon being brought to this country in the manner in which they were. The right honourable gentleman does not go quite so far as to say that we delivered Holland, but he contends that Ministers had sufficient reason to believe that they would be able to deliver it. We ask what these grounds were which justified the attempt; but the right honourable gentleman shrinks from the inquiry. It would be improper to disclose them: and all that he tells us is, that he is a follower of Lord Burleigh, the prime Minister of Queen Elizabeth. I do not contend, that it would not be of advantage to this country that Holland should be rescued from the dominion of France; but I contend, that Government was not justified in making so arduous an attempt without being assured of the good will of the natives, and that if they had any such assurances, they did not avail themselves of them as they ought to have done. What objection can there be to lay before us the favourable intelligence they had from Holland, if any such existed. These Dutch friends, in my opinion, do not from their conduct deserve that any very great delicacy should be shewn them. But if it is improper that their names should be made public, still this is no reason against the production of their letters. There is such a thing as a Secret Committee. Before this, the affairs of the Bank had been laid open; and with regard to these the most inviolable secrecy had been preserved. Before a Secret Committee the most delicate business can be transacted with perfect security to all parties. But I will not insist upon their names being produced. Let us only have copies of their letters, with a blank wherever there should be a name improper to meet the public eye. This method was successfully practised in the last war, with respect to those engaged in the affair of Ushant. Why then must we have merely the assertion of Ministers, that pressing invitations were sent them from the leading men in Holland to come and take possession of that country? If they really did, does it not seem strange, that when the army landed in Holland no symptoms of affection for the English were displayed? That their should not have been a rising in this quarter or that, would have been no way astonishing. Yet there was not only no general insurrection in their favour, but, though they remained in the country in prodigious strength for six weeks, no one man of any eminence declared

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himself their friend during all that time. I should like, though I have no curiosity to know the names of the writers of these letters, to be told their date (for very likely Ministers did not accept of their invitations at the proper time), and likewise the part of the coast where they requested us to land. This likewise is of importance; for if we were invited to the Helder, we were soon shewn that we had nothing to expect from the professions and promises of the perfidious Dutch, and ought instantly to have given up the enterprise. If we were invited to other parts of the coast, where we would have met with a friendly reception, what did we do at the Helder, of the affections of whose inhabitants we were ignorant? Let Ministers justify themselves if they can, by producing the documents upon which their conduct was founded. It is unconstitutional, and an insult upon this House, to say, that this cannot be done consistently with the preservation of secrecy. It has been given as an instance of the Dutch being well affected to Great Britain, that the peasants did not drive off their sheep and oxen from the Helder, nor carry away their provisions; but the right honourable gentleman soon after mentioned another circumstance which completely accounted for the first—every thing which was procured from the Dutch was regularly and fully paid for. The right honourable gentleman does not need to be told, that the Dutch are fond of gain, and that they will never refuse a shilling for a piece of goods from any one, and sell the same for six-pence. This is not only Dutch human nature, but human nature all the world over. Ministers suspecting that the inhabitants of *this* country might not scruple to sell their commodities for a good price even to the French, had several years ago brought a bill into Parliament, obliging the farmers, upon the appearance of an enemy, to drive their cattle from the coast, and to remove their corn with the greatest possible expedition. The right honourable gentleman said, that, from general reasoning, we were sure of a friendly reception in Holland; that every nation which had been subject to France, longed to throw off her galling yoke. This position is not true without an exception:—when Switzerland, the country of all others which has received the greatest injuries from France, was evacuated by Massena's army, we do not find that the inhabitants gave the Austrians a very warm reception, or that they very eagerly embraced the offer of entering into the service of England; the Dutch had infinitely less to complain of from their conquerors—they had only to pay a few contributions, and were left in the quiet possession of the rest of their property: this was sufficiently grievous, to be sure, but by no means to be compared to being obliged to maintain at their expence a numerous

army. Neither had we any experience of their good will, nor any evidence to that purpose from facts. From the moment the army landed, it was evident that the inhabitants were hostile to us, and from that moment the enterprise ought to have been abandoned. Why, from motives of vanity, obstinately persevere in an undertaking which was evidently hopeless? Will any man pretend then, Sir, that there are no grounds for an inquiry, when the expedition was undertaken without any sufficient reason to expect the friendly co-operation of the natives, which was absolutely necessary to its success, and when it was persisted in after it was clearly demonstrated that they were hostilely inclined? My honourable friend who opened the debate, asked why the expedition was so long put off? and stated, that in the end of August tempestuous weather might be looked for. I expected that some cogent reason would have been assigned by the right honourable gentleman, but no such reason was produced; our army was not sooner ready. But I should like to know, Sir, why the Militia bill which had conferred such benefits upon the country was not sooner passed? The Expedition had been long in contemplation, and the Russian treaty was signed on the 18th of June. In this case much more good might have been effected by a diversion, as it might have been made at an earlier period of the campaign. The army would have been in readiness to act at the beginning of the season, when favourable weather might have been expected, and the Expedition undertaken with some prospect of success. The delay was not the only evil occasioned by the lateness of the period at which the Militia act was passed. The right honourable gentleman said, that he never should forget the day when he saw the British troops, enthusiastic with the love of their King and country, and fired with a noble desire of military fame, set sail from the coast of England. I did not witness the embarkation; but I have heard most moving accounts of it from those who did; and from these accounts I cannot say that I regret my not having been present at the melancholy scene. I should have seen numbers of fine young men who had been entrapped by the lure of ten guineas, ill clothed, unacquainted with their officers, and wretchedly disciplined, shipped off for an inhospitable shore, there to be slaughtered and to slaughter one another. Sir, I maintain it, and will prove it at the bar of this House, when it shall go into a Committee of Inquiry, that the state of these recruits from the Militia was shocking in the extreme, and that that was a cause, and a principal cause, of the failure of the enterprise. They were brave, Sir, I allow; none of them testified a want of courage; but many, if not all of them were ill disciplined, and were always apt to get into confusion from

their ignorance of the capacity to do of several. They from to rally the feeling for an inquiry must yet be commanded them could was not acquainted chance affair is from the same as when the nience out. it was seized stopped produced necessity so. In all the
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their ignorance. They shot each other in numbers, and to their incapacity to make the common manœuvres, is to be attributed the loss of several of the brave officers who fell in the ill concerted enterprise. They frequently fell into disorder, and their officers, in their attempts to rally them, were marked out by the enemy's riflemen. I put it to the feelings of the House, if this, of itself, is not a sufficient ground for an inquiry? I call particularly upon the Colonels of Militia, who must yet feel a strong affection for those whom they formerly commanded, and must consider them in the light of their children. Let them come forward and insist upon knowing the reasons why time was not given these men to be drilled, to be clothed, and to become acquainted with their officers, that they might have had an equal chance in facing their opponents? In another point of view, the affair is disastrous. Can it be supposed that these men will return from suffering such unexpected and unnecessary hardships, with the same attachment to the Government, and zeal for the service, as when they set out? I would beg leave to mention another inconvenience produced by the hurry with which the Expedition was fitted out. From one end of the kingdom to the other, for several weeks, it was impossible to travel. Horses and carriages were every where seized indiscriminately to transport the troops; many people were stopped upon important journeys; and the greatest disorder was produced over the whole face of the country. Perhaps all this was necessary; let then Ministers come forward and prove that it was so. In my opinion, by passing the Militia Bill a few months sooner, all these evils might have easily been avoided.

“At length, on the 22d of August, Sir Ralph Abercromby landed on the coast of Holland. Much has been said in praise of this General, but not more than he deserves; all his actions are unimpeachable—his conduct during the whole transaction was meritorious in the extreme. With 10,000 men he got possession of the Helder. On the 27th he was re-inforced by General Don's detachment, which placed him at the head of 15,000 men, yet he remained in the position he had originally taken. Is it not strange that 15,000 men, headed by an able General, appointed with the best officers, and going by invitation, should not be able, or should think it imprudent, to advance? If the Dutch were well affected, why did they not instantly declare themselves? Their expectations must have been fully answered in the force which was sent to their relief:—No French troops were then in Holland to keep them in awe. Yet no one joined us, or testified the smallest attachment to our cause. From that moment, I maintain, the enterprise was hopeless, and the right honourable gentleman ought to have been

sensible that it was so. He has read us a letter from Sir Ralph Abercromby, in which that general expresses sanguine hopes of being soon able to penetrate to the Waal, and to finish the war in one campaign. But had the right honourable Secretary laid before us Sir Ralph's letters of a date a few days later, we should probably see language of a very different import. It is unfair conduct to the House, to read a single letter, and not the whole correspondence: Above all, it is unfair to that illustrious Commander. On his account I wish for an inquiry; and am sure it would turn out to his honour. There are questions which he alone can answer, and which would probably prove the right honourable gentleman to be the first of War Ministers; though I cannot but remark, that most of the expeditions undertaken under his auspices have been singularly unfortunate. St. Domingo, where a few more guineas were expended, and a few more lives lost, than the right honourable gentleman has been pleased to state to have been the case in Holland, was at last evacuated; Corsica was evacuated; Quiberon was evacuated, with circumstances no way honourable to the British name. But when such expedition was necessary and stipulated for, why did not his Royal Highness the Duke of York fail at the same time with General Don? There is likewise another question which I should wish to have answered. Why were all our forces sent to one place? There were upwards of 32,000 British troops, and nearly 19,000 Russians, though only 17,500 had been stipulated for; in all betwixt 43 and 45,000 men. What an immense force to be cooped up in a narrow peninsula, where but few could act at a time. It is strange, that the right honourable gentleman, who is so fond of diversions, did not think of making a diversion in some other quarter. This is a point which only military men can determine, and the House is bound to examine officers, that they may discover the truth. I pledge myself, that there are not three Generals who will sign a paper approving of the plan. It is strange that Ministers should not court an inquiry which would clear up all difficulties, and evince their innocence to the world. Forty-five thousand men were six weeks in Holland, and were unable to advance above twenty-five miles. Yet there is nobody to blame! I believe, that if the great Duke of Marlborough had commanded the army instead of his Royal Highness the Duke of York, its operations would have been equally unsuccessful. But whether his Royal Highness concluded the capitulation from instructions he had received, or of his own accord, he, in my opinion, should have demanded an inquiry. The matter rests betwixt him and the right honourable gentleman. Ministers refuse an inquiry; he therefore should have insisted upon

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one. This is the only way in which he can shift the disgrace from himself and the gallant officers who served under him, to those upon whom it ought to lie. I have no reason to make any apology for the liberties I use with the name of his Royal Highness. Although he should one day be my Sovereign, he will not think the worse of me for having been solicitous for the honour of the English army. The right honourable gentleman sees nothing disgraceful or detrimental in the capitulation concluded at the Helder. We gave up 8,000 seamen, who were merely lumber. His Royal Highness had not been of the same opinion, else he would have acceded at once to the demand of General Brune, or rather begged the French, as a favour, to take back all their prisoners now in England. The capitulation, Sir, seems to me to enfix an indelible stain upon the national character; it is shameful and disgraceful, and inflict's a deep wound upon the soldiers' honour. A King's Son, who commanded 40,000 men, capitulated to a French General who had only 31,000. We owe it to our Sovereign, and we owe it to our constituents, to inquire strictly into the causes of this unheard-of disgrace. The Expedition either failed from unforeseen accidents, or from the folly of those who planned it. Let these circumstances then be stated, or let the guilty be dragged forth to punishment. I do not wish to harass any man; I only desire to vindicate the military character; and I think it particularly essential that it should be vindicated, at a moment when it is openly professed that we have thrown away the scabbard; when it is said we are engaged to dethrone a military usurper; when an eternal war against France is declared: those who vote for the war should support the motion; those who vote for the war Minister should certainly oppose it. The right honourable gentleman, in stating the expence of the Expedition, was guilty of a few inaccuracies. Whether he is exact as to the amount of the money paid to contractors for transports, &c. I will not pretend to say; but I know for certain, that a merchant of the city got for his share alone 585,000*l*. The Russian subsidy for 17,000 men, he has totally omitted, and that may be safely estimated at a million sterling. He should likewise have stated the levy money given to those who volunteered from the Militia, and the expence to the nation of the families of those who had been killed or wounded—185, perhaps, only died in the hospital, but how many wounded died without being brought to the hospital; how many left it uncured? how few of those who left it will be able to gain their daily bread? The other side of the account was equally unfair. The Dutch ships are not his assets, he has them merely in trust. I question whether the number of seamen will

be really reduced; Lord Duncan still keeps a large fleet in the North Seas. The Expedition has been every way disastrous; and it will not be the least of the evils it has brought upon the country, if it shall be the cause of the character of Parliament being hurt to the degree in which it must suffer if this motion is rejected." Mr. Tierney said, that though he knew Ministers would find means to screen themselves, he did not expect that they would have thus peremptorily opposed the motion. He cited several precedents where an inquiry had been voted upon grounds much less strong than had been advanced in the present instance, particularly in the time of the illustrious Onslow, when an English fleet had been beat by an inferior one of the enemy. Here Mr. Tierney read the very spirited address then voted to His Majesty, humbly pressing him to lay the papers necessary for an investigation before the House, and concluded by saying—"I hope, Sir, that this will appear to be the sense of the House of Commons to-night, and that you will soon have an opportunity of addressing His Majesty in similar words."

Mr. PERCIVAL said, that the conduct of gentlemen on the other side of the House appeared to him unaccountable, when he recollected that they had long and uniformly persisted in opinions which were proved to be repugnant to the sentiments of the people of this country, and at the same time in asserting themselves to be the organs of the country. This conduct they had resumed on the present discussion. Their favourite doctrine appeared to be, that this House was degraded; and their wish to persuade the people that in the votes which are passed it is not actuated by any regard for their honour and interest. The material object of the inquiry which they had moved this evening, was to ascertain if there was any blame imputable for the partial failure of the Expedition, and to whom that blame was imputable. The honourable gentlemen had both stated, that no blame was to be imputed to the British officers or soldiers concerned in the Expedition; and the motive for finding out whether there was any blame, and to whom imputable, was to correct a statement made to the Court of Peterburgh, complaining of the conduct of our Commanders and troops. [Here there was a cry of "No! No!" from the Opposition Bench]—Mr. Percival said, that he certainly understood the expressions of the honourable gentleman in this sense; but if they did not mean so, there was no occasion for him to enter into an argument upon this point. As, however, some allusion certainly was made to this as a motive for the inquiry, he would only observe, that nothing could be more absurd than to say, because a misrepresentation was made at Peterburgh that our soldiers had misconducted themselves; that therefore,

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an inquiry was to be instituted in the British Parliament, which entertained no doubts respecting their conduct, merely to satisfy the Court of Petersburg, while, at the same time, it had been stated and proved, that such an inquiry would be equally hurtful to this country, as still engaged in war, and to her allies. So many points had been conceded by the honourable gentleman, that he did not well know upon what ground they would now rest their motion for inquiry. It had been conceded, that the object of the Expedition was British, tending to the interests and honour of this country; and that its success would have gained immortal honour to Administration. It had been conceded, that the conduct of our commanders and soldiers, who conducted and executed the Expedition, was not only unimpeachable, but highly honourable and glorious. It had been conceded, that one great object of the Expedition had been gained by the surrender of the Dutch fleet, an event which had been allowed to confer immortal honour on the country. It had been said, that the object was British—he might fairly add that the honourable gentleman wished that it had succeeded. But if attention is paid to a subsequent part of his speech, a glaring contradiction may be observed. One part of this British object was the capture of the Dutch fleet, and the means by which this object was attained he regretted, because these means were what he was pleased to style the treachery and mutiny of the seamen who manned it. The remainder of the object of this Expedition, the same gentleman stated, could only be attained by the co-operation of the inhabitants of the country, and by the favourable wishes of the Dutch army. But had the object of delivering Holland from the power of France been attained according to his ideas, there must have been more treachery and sedition; and he would have regretted the attainment of this truly British object, on account of this sedition and treachery. Had the British troops rescued Holland with the concurrence of the whole people, this would have been treachery in them of the same kind and degree with that of the sailors in the fleet; and the honourable gentleman would of course have disapproved of the success of our arms, and upon his own principles disapproved of the attainment of an object which he himself called British, by the very means which he pointed out as the only method of its attainment. An honourable gentleman (Mr. Tierney) said, that if the Expedition had terminated with the capture of the Dutch fleet, it would have been a termination of immortal honour to this country. But if the Expedition had terminated here, he thought that it would have brought immortal disgrace on the country. It would have been a swindling trick, a shameful attempt to impose upon and

cheat the Dutch out of their fleet upon a stipulation to endeavour to rescue their country from the tyranny of France, but, no sooner had we attained possession of this fleet, than we renounced the terms on which it was put into our hands. The same gentleman said, that the soldiers drafted from the Militia were raw boys devoted to certain death, and alluded to the effects which the experience of such treatment would have upon the minds, the zeal, and the sentiments of our troops. But it was singular enough, if this were the case, that the effect was not more preceptible; for since the time at which this effect might have been expected to be produced, ten thousand men had enlisted in the same and for a similar service. The difficulty (as to the publicity and its bad consequences) of an inquiry had been endeavoured to be obviated, by alledging that the business might be conducted in a Secret Committee; but he doubted much of the secrecy which would be the result of such a plan. The number of Members who would sit in it, and a variety of other circumstances, tended much in his mind to take away from such a plan all security for secrecy. Another expedient which was proposed, was to have blanks for the names and places from which the letters were dated. But the whole letters must be left blank, or they would disclose the channels of correspondence and intelligence, our means of information respecting the state of the country, and all that our interest calls upon us to conceal. The honourable gentleman wishes to know the dates of the letters which invited us to Holland, the place at which they invited our troops to land, and whether we were invited to land at the Helder. But might not the invitation come from the interior of the country? and this is a possible supposition. The troops must land somewhere; this point of landing must in such a case have been left to the discretion of the planners of this Expedition; and these inquiries could not be answered without making disclosures, which in many points of view would be extremely prejudicial to the interests of this country and of her allies. The honourable gentleman then comes to the conduct of the Expedition: Mr. Percival allowed that capitulation, abstractedly considered, is not a very honourable conclusion to a military Expedition; but this is a mere abstract consideration. Two of the three grand objects of the Expedition were attained; the Dutch fleet was captured; and, a strong and powerful diversion was effected in favour of our allies. The third was found not attainable. The consideration then was, how the return of our troops to their own country could be best effected. It had been allowed that a General may be defeated, or may fail in his object, without incurring any disgrace. Our army had failed in one of their objects; this

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failure did not imply disgrace. They found themselves in a situation that proved another man could not be lost usefully to the country in the prosecution of this object. Under these circumstances, the alternative remained of adopting the line of conduct which was not pursued, of inundating the country, which was allowed to be infinitely worse, or of sacrificing a thousand men at least of the rear guard of our army in the embarkation, which certainly the gentlemen would allow, after so eloquently deploring the effusion of British blood, was the least eligible of the three. The expedient adopted was then the best that could be adopted; it was not disgraceful, because it was merely an adaptation to circumstances which were countenanced by the attainment of the other objects of the Expedition.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR assured the House, that the support he was ready to give to the present motion did not arise from any thing like party spirit. He was confident that in doing so he acted in conformity with the wishes of a great majority of the country, on whom the failure of the Expedition and the capitulation of the Duke of York had made the most deep and serious sensation. He anxiously hoped that Parliament would inquire into the miscarriage of an enterprize which was looked to with such general expectation of success, and upon which so much of the blood and treasure of the nation had been expended to no effect. He certainly was happy that to a certain degree it had succeeded; but when an army of above 30,000 men had entered Holland without being able to accomplish any thing like the object they had in view, some solid satisfactory reason should be adduced for so marked a miscarriage; Parliament should not rest satisfied with the *ipse dixit* of a Minister; it should be clearly made out to whom the blame justly applied. The attempt to rescue Holland he had always supported; and he felt that it was essential to this country that Holland should not be adverse to us. His wish, therefore, was, to be informed upon what ground the Expedition was undertaken, and why it was not planned and sent out earlier? for the lateness of the attempt was in a great measure the cause of its miscarriage. As to the mode in which the Militia had been treated, he had always disapproved of it. It was a measure which bereft the Militia of all its spirit; and such was the opinion of the generality of the militia officers, which he hoped they would now come forward and express. The country gentlemen were driven from the Militia; and its principal officers were disgusted with the treatment they had received. In short, the Militia was lost to the country. This, in his opinion, was strong ground of inquiry. But the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) never during his whole Administration would consent to any in-

quiry. If, however, on an occasion like the present, the House did not seriously press for an inquiry, their inquisitorial capacity was gone. Blame must attach either on the army or on Ministers. The inquiry would decide on which of them. His honourable friend (Mr. Sheridan) had said that, though Ministers were proved to be in fault, the country would not call for their removal. He differed essentially from him, and was certain the country would remove them, and replace them by gentlemen on his side of the House. He was not mealy-mouthed when he spoke of Ministers. He was ready to declare that they had no talents for carrying on a war (*a laugh*). Gentlemen might take what he said for a joke; but he did not mean it as such. He sincerely lamented the loss of the many brave Englishmen that had fallen in this ill-fated Expedition; he also regretted the fall of the many thousands employed in it, though not particularly connected with him and this country. He therefore felt himself bound in conscience to vote for the present inquiry.

Mr. ADDINGTON observed, that having maturely and dispassionately considered the nature of the proposed inquiry, it appeared to him to rest upon two grounds; first, upon the propriety of forming an opinion of the measure from its result; and secondly, that, in consequence of a considerable failure, there should arise a necessity of inquiry. But those gentlemen who supported the motion had not perhaps carefully considered, that the most ill-advised measures had often produced the most brilliant success; and that the wisest and best planned projects had terminated in disaster and defeat. The honourable gentleman would admit, that it was not in mortal man to command success, and Government could not undertake to controul the elements. Much had been said upon the nature of the Dutch; he certainly did not know, nor did he desire to know, what might have been the information received from Holland by His Majesty's Ministers; but as he believed human nature to be the same in every country, it followed that the Dutch, harassed, plundered, and oppressed, must have sincerely wished for emancipation from French tyranny:

“The flesh will quiver where the pincers tear,
“The blood will follow where the knife is driven.”

And it was impossible to suppose that the Dutch would, if favoured with an opportunity, suppress their sorrow, their regret, and indignation. He contended, that Government would have been guilty in a great degree, had it not made the attempt; and concluded with

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an eulogy on the skill and valour of the Generals employed in the Expedition, and the courage and intrepidity of the army.

Sir JAMES M. PULTENEY did not wish to enter into any detail respecting the Expedition ; but rose merely for the purpose of setting the honourable gentleman (Mr. Tierney) right with respect to the numbers of the respective armies. The English and Russian army had been stated at 45,000 men, and that of the French at 35,000. He did not pretend to an accurate knowledge ; but he believed the numbers of the former might be estimated at 36,000 men, of whom latterly there were about 10,000 in killed, wounded, and missing. The French might have had 25 or 30,000 men in the action of the 2d ; and from the 6th, to the time when the convention was agreed to, the enemy was continually receiving reinforcements. Large bodies of troops had been drawn from the frontiers of France, which were replaced by battalions from the interior, and therefore the force of the enemy, which was superior in numbers, was every day becoming more so. Had the army been treble the force of the enemy, it must have embarked ; and the reasons became more pressing in consequence of its inferiority. There was in his mind a clear, evident, and absolute necessity for making a sacrifice in order to embark with security. With respect to the observations of the honourable gentleman on the bounty of ten guineas, and the boys who were said to have been seduced, he should say that he understood the bounty was chiefly taken by men who had been either in the militia or regulars, and were good men and soldiers. As to the want of discipline on the Continent, it certainly was not to be expected that men unacquainted with their officers could act with the same regularity, strictness, and discipline, as others who were accustomed to their commanders ; yet some allowance ought to be made, and he could say more from speculation than from actual fact, that the men so enlisted had conducted themselves well.

Colonel HOPE noticed and explained the difference of the paper in Mr. Tierney's possession, and that read by Mr. Secretary Dundas, with respect to the article of expenditure ; and Mr. Long having also particularly explained the cause of the apparent difference between both, as in reality the extraordinary expenditure amounted to 180,000*l.* only, Mr. Tierney admitted, that he was satisfied with the manner in which the difference was explained.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that after having been indulged at such length, he should not trespass long on the patience of the House. He was induced principally to rise, from two allusions that had been made to him ; one by an honourable gentleman near him (Mr. M.

A. Taylor), and one by an honourable gentleman opposite (Mr. Addington). His honourable friend had accused him of being mealy-mouthed—an objection which was seldom made to him; for in general he was accused of being rather too plain a speaker. But he accused him of having taken a line of candour for which he ought to apologize, in saying, that he did not wish to dispossess Ministers of their places, and that the country would not desire to see them dispossessed, even though they might disapprove of their conduct in this Expedition. He assured the honourable gentleman that he blamed him without reason. He had no such candour. He sincerely wished to see Ministers dispossessed for the good of the country; and if any thing that he could urge or say would bring that event about, he would exert every effort in his power. What he had said, was, that in his present motion, he was not prompted to this inquiry *merely* to prove to the country, and to the world, the incapacity of His Majesty's Ministers; for it could not redound to national honour or to national benefit to do that, if no other result was to come from it. But the honourable gentleman said that he was confident the opinion of the country was against His Majesty's Ministers in this Expedition, and he was sincerely desirous of turning them out, and of seeing the gentlemen on that side of the House pass over to the other. In this, said Mr. Sheridan, it is truly creditable to the honourable gentleman, that he would not pass over with us: he would rest in the mid-way; he would rest in that Chair, which it requires the greatest talents and the greatest respect to fill. Now, as to the allusion from the honourable gentleman on the other side, his chief objection to the motion was, that it had not been made in October last, before the failure of the Expedition was known, or after it was known, that he had not made it after Parliament was adjourned! He had given notice of his motion on the first day after the meeting. It was for Ministers to answer for its being so long delayed; since they, and not he, had made the adjournment. It had been objected to him, that he had made use of the word disgrace. Surely in the use of this term he had expressed himself clearly with regard to all the officers and men engaged in the execution of the enterprise, and had limited the word to the planners only. Nothing could be more clear than that the mere failure of a military Expedition was not in itself a disgrace:—a town might be besieged and taken, though the garrison had displayed the greatest courage and perseverance. Circumstances might defeat the most obstinate valour; but what he thought necessarily brought disgrace along with it, was, when a country was deluded by promises which were not kept—when a people was tempted by offers of protection

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to shew themselves, and to manifest their sentiments; and when, instead of the protection held out to them, the planners of an Expedition were forced to capitulate for their own retreat. This was what he ascribed to the character of the late Expedition. They entered North Holland holding out to the inhabitants offers of protection, and inviting them to rise. It was true, indeed, that the people did not obey the invitation; but suppose that they had, and that, trusting to the promise of Great Britain, they had come forward, and that afterwards they had been abandoned, would not the nation have been disgraced? Would it not have been responsible for all the blood that must have flowed from such an issue? If France had invaded Ireland with 45,000 men, and had professed, as the British professed to the Dutch, that they had come to rescue them from oppression and tyranny—the mere supposition gave rise to a melancholy sentiment; for they had seen, with all their pretended knowledge of human nature, that 45,000 men had not induced the Dutch to give up the horrors of French fraternity, or to prefer the friendship of Great Britain to the evils under which they groaned. But would any man say, that if 45,000 French had landed in Ireland during the late insurrection there, British influence would have been as great upon the people of Ireland, as French influence, with all its iniquity, was upon the Dutch? If 45,000 French had landed in Ireland, had held out offers of protection to the people, and had afterwards been forced to enter into a capitulation for their own escape, would any man say that they would not have been disgraced, and that they would not have been answerable for all the horrors, the whippings, the half hangings, and the whole hangings, that took place after the rebellion in that miserable country? In like manner, he affixed the term disgrace upon the men who, without the certainty of keeping their word, boasted of their power, and committed the nation by their folly and their incapacity. Much had been said about the diversion which this made—and *diversion* was a favourite expression of Ministers. Three objects were stated to have been in view in the Expedition, two of which were said to have been obtained—he denied this fact. Two of the objects were incompatible—If it was one of our objects to replace the Stadtholder, it could not be our object to take their navy. But it was a diversion: It forced the French to send their troops into Holland, and thus we assisted the allies in another quarter. What! would not the French have sent troops into Holland but for this Expedition? Away then with French oppression! They could leave the Dutch then to themselves. But if the Expedition was meant as a diversion, Holland, of all other places, was the worst for

a diversion; since by the nature of the country, a very inferior body of troops could successfully resist a greatly superior force. He would agree that it was a fair thing to call a descent a diversion, where, landing on an enemies shore, you drew great bodies of men from other quarters, and kept them in play; but it was quite another thing, when, having landed with the professed object of replacing an exiled authority, and having failed, you came home and called it a diversion. You had no right to call it by such a name. But it was to be repeated:—repeated! What, after the trial which had been made? and never was a trial so completely made of the dispositions of any people: could insanity itself think of repeating the experiment? After having entered the country not merely with a superior force, but with a force so greatly superior, that, if the people were in their hearts at all disposed to come over to the British, they had every temptation—if not a man was found disposed to trust us, could it be believed, that, after the experience they had had, they would *now* come, if the experiment were to be repeated? Mr. Sheridan concluded by expressing his surprise at the conduct of Ministers upon this occasion. He did expect that they would endeavour to have made the inquiry nugatory; but that they would have coloured their indisposition to enter into the investigation with some plausible pretext. He was disappointed. The House had seen the ground they had taken, and the country would see their motives. He lamented, for the sake of the brave army, and for the honour of the nation, that they thought it consistent with common decency to get rid of the subject by such means.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR begged leave to say two words in explanation. He certainly did not assert that the opinion of the country was either for or against Ministers on the subject of this Expedition: he expressed only his wish that they would agree with him; and if so, he thought the removal of Ministers ought to follow. But, as to passing over to their places, he believed the honourable gentleman full as anxious for a place as himself. As to the Chair, he never desired to see it more ably filled.

The House divided; and their appeared for the motion, 45—
Against it, 216.

LIST of the MINORITY.

Anson, T.	Bird, W. W.
Adair, R.	Coke, D. P.
Bouverie, Hon. W. H.	Cavendish, Lord G.
Burdett, Sir F.	Combe, H. C. (Lord Mayor)
Brogden, J.	Colhoun, W.

Dundas, Hon. C.
 Geary, Sir W.
 Grey, C.
 Hufsey, W.
 Howard, H.
 Hobhouse, B.
 Harrison, J.
 Jekyll, J.
 Jones, T. T.
 Kemp, T.
 Langston, J.
 Lawrence, Dr.
 Lemon, Sir W.
 Milner, Sir W.
 North, D.
 Northey, W.
 Osborne, Lord, F.
 Patten, Colonel

Plomer, W.
 Richardson, J.
 Ridley, Sir M. W.
 Robson, M. B.
 Russell, Lord J.
 Russell, Lord W.
 St. John, Hon. St. A.
 Sheridan, R. B.
 Smith, W.
 Stanley, Colonel
 Stanley, Lord
 Sturt, C.
 Taylor, M. A.
 Tierney, G.
 Tufton, Hon. H.
 Western, C. C.
 Winnington, Sir E.

TELLERS.

Whitbread, Sam.

Denison, W. J.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, February 11.

Mr. Chancellor PITT brought down a message from His Majesty, which was as follows :

GEORGE R.

His Majesty thinks it right to inform the House of Commons, that, in consequence of three ships having arrived in the ports of this country from Mogadore, on the coast of Africa, with foul bills of health, which left that place at the time when the plague raged there with the greatest violence, and that goods were put on board the said ships particularly susceptible of infection, and under the most suspicious circumstances, His Majesty has thought proper, by the advice of his Privy Council, to order the said ships and cargoes to be destroyed, in conformity to what has been the usage in former instances of the same nature ; and he recommends to the House of Commons, to consider whether any, and what, allowance should be made to the parties, for the losses they may have sustained in consequence of such destruction of the ships and cargoes.

G. R.

The Message being read,

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that it be referred to the consideration of a Select Committee ; observing, that a minute and critical inquiry should be made into the motives which induced these ships

to fail under so suspicious a character; and that, after examining the invoices, such reparation should be made to the owners, if nothing appeared to criminate their conduct or intentions, as the justice of the House should think proper and adequate. The utmost care should, at the same time, be employed to inquire into the motives which prompted such hazardous speculations.

Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY said, that he was credibly informed that no plague raged at that place when the goods were shipped, nor was there any reason to believe that any contagion could possibly arise from them: in his opinion, therefore, it was improper to destroy them. No danger was to be apprehended where quarantine had been exactly observed, as he must suppose it had been in the present instance. The measure of destroying these ships was, therefore, rather too hastily resorted to. But he would not on that account resist the proposed inquiry; on the contrary, he approved of it, as it would lead to a discovery whether there were sufficient reasons for destroying the ships, &c. and that with such precipitation.

Mr. Chancellor PITT assured the worthy Baronet that his information was erroneous, both with regard to the haste with which he supposed the ships had been destroyed, and to the reasons for believing that there was no well-grounded apprehension of a plague having existed at the time and place alluded to. The matter in question had been the subject of long and repeated inquiry, and the most eminent of the faculty had given it as their opinion, that the precaution that had been used should be resorted to: that the danger of a contagion being spread from the opening and exposing of these goods to the air appeared imminent in the extreme; for it was well known that two persons who had been employed in putting the cargo on board died before the succeeding day. It was not, then, too much, or too precipitate, to adopt the precautions that had been taken. He was happy, however, to assure the House, that no danger of any kind was now to be apprehended from the circumstance.

The thanks of the House was then voted to His Majesty, and a Select Committee, consisting of Mr. Pitt, Mr. Windham, the Attorney General, Mr. Bragge, Sir William Young, Mr. Burdon, Mr. Steele, Mr. Rose, and Lord Hawkesbury, were ordered to report the same, with their opinions thereon, to the House.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL, previous to a motion for renewing the Suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act, moved "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, praying that he would be graciously pleased to give directions that there be laid be-

for the House a list of the names of the persons now detained in custody, in virtue of an act made to secure and detain such persons as were suspected of conspiring against His Majesty's Government, together with the names of the prisons in which they were detained, and the dates of their respective commitments."—Ordered.

Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY presented a petition in behalf of Mr. Macdowal, who, as a merchant, was connected with the islands of Grenada and St. Vincent. The mercantile house at Glasgow, to which Mr. Macdowal belonged, had obtained the sum of 240,000*l.* out of the loan granted in aid of the merchants belonging to these islands. The commercial embarrassments still existing that gave rise to the loan which Parliament had granted, the prayer of the petitioners was, that farther time might be allowed them for the repayment of their first installment, it appearing that the petitioners had now funds and property in their possession more than sufficient to make good the sum which still remained due on their part. The petition was then brought up, and Sir William Pulteney moved that a Committee be appointed to examine into the nature of the facts upon which the prayer of the petition was founded.

Mr. Chancellor PITT expressed his satisfaction that the honourable Baronet had confined himself to that motion. It was of importance both to the individual whom it concerned, and to the public at large, that the merits of such petitions should be minutely inquired into. Above all, the greatest caution should be observed in committing and establishing the principle laid down in the petition. If the circumstances were such as stated in the petition, he saw no reason for refusing to accede to the prayer of it, after a Select Committee should have had sufficient time to investigate and pronounce upon its merits.

The petition was ordered to lie upon the table.

Mr. WHITBREAD then rose to make a motion for leave to bring in a bill to explain and amend the Act which regulates the wages of artificers and labourers. When he had first the honour of making a similar motion, he had the good fortune to meet with the countenance and support of several gentlemen whom he did not now see in their places, and his proposition was assented to *nem. con.* After he had brought in his bill, and only upon the motion for its being read a second time, the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) objected to the provisions of it, observing, that a thorough revision of the poor laws was necessary; and he pledged himself to bring in a bill for that purpose. The bill was brought in and printed, but was never brought under the discussion of the House. He would

not now attempt to canvass the merits of that bill ; it was sufficient to say, that all its provisions were regarded as absolutely impracticable. Still, in the hopes that the right honourable gentleman would persevere in his intention of bringing in his bill, he (Mr. Whitbread) desisted from making any farther motion that Session. But now, finding that the right honourable gentleman had wholly given up all idea of prosecuting a measure which he formerly seemed to have so much at heart, he himself was determined to renew his attempts, and to revive his bill. Those who knew him would not suppose that he wished the poor to be overpaid. He well knew that in many places, especially in great manufacturing towns, those who earned more than was sufficient to provide for their families, usually squandered the surplus away in destructive and ruinous luxuries. But in every well-regulated community, artificers and labourers should be paid so as to be enabled to keep themselves and families in a comfortable situation. It was his creed respecting the poor, that no excuse should be left them for doing wrong, and that when they offended, severity should be employed in punishing their offences. He hoped the House would concur with him in that opinion ; and if so, how was it to be reduced to practice ? The right honourable gentleman had contended, that nothing effectual could be done by regulations ; that all must be the result of principle ; and that, in amending the poor laws, no regulation could be made respecting the amount of wages, but that labour should be left to find its own level ; it was impossible, however, that labour should find its own level, as the laws on that head now stood. What first gave rise in his mind to the idea of the bill he wished to introduce, was the situation to which the poor were reduced in 1795. Their distresses then were nearly the same as they are now ; and very exemplary attention was likewise then shewn by the richer classes to alleviate their distresses ; but, before they received that relief, the pressure under which they laboured was extreme. The farmers would not raise the price of labour—he consulted the statute-book, but could discover nothing in it that could compel the farmers to do their duty. The Justices, he found, had no power to grant relief ; but they were armed with power to oppress the poor. In virtue of the 5th of Elizabeth, cap. 4th, the Justices had the power of regulating the *maximum* of labour. This was highly oppressive and injurious to the labouring poor. A law therefore appeared necessary for enabling the Justices to regulate also the *minimum* of labour. In this view he begged leave to submit his motion to the House for reviving his former bill. He wished only that it might be read a first time, and then printed, and a proper interval allowed for a thorough

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consideration of it. Gentlemen might have an opportunity, when in the country, of consulting whether it might prove beneficial or not. He could not expect that it would meet with that general concurrence which it might receive if it came from the other side of the House. All he entreated was, that it might be examined with care and attention. He also begged it to be remembered, that the bill would go not to compel, but to enable, the Magistrate to do justice to the poor. The law indeed, if enacted, might generally lie dormant, and only be enforced in hard times, when the poor were oppressed as they now are in several districts. He had attentively examined the existing poor laws; and the more he examined them the more convinced he was, that the fault lay not in the laws themselves, but in the execution of them. Where they were well executed, the poor enjoyed as much comfort as it was possible for them to enjoy. But where they were not duly enforced, the poor endured the most intolerable miseries: to prevent these abuses was the object of his bill. He would therefore conclude, by moving, "That leave be given to bring in a bill to explain and amend so much of the 5th of Eliz. cap. 4. as empowers justices of the peace to regulate the wages of artificers, labourers," &c.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that though he disapproved of the measure proposed by the honourable gentleman, he would not oppose the motion which he had made. The subject was not to be lightly treated of; it was of the greatest importance, and required cool and deliberate discussion. The honourable gentleman was certainly right in supposing that this was not a party question. It interested the feelings of every individual; and from which ever side of the House it came, it would meet with equal attention. The honourable gentleman had stated, that he (Mr. Pitt) had opposed the motion when it was formerly proposed, and that he had brought forward nothing upon the subject himself. But he opposed the measure formerly, because he was convinced that it was not calculated to be productive of benefit to the lower classes of the community; not because he intended to bring forward some preferable plan. If the honourable gentleman thought there was such necessity for the bill he proposed to bring in, and that it would tend so effectually to meliorate the condition of the poor, why did he not bring it in sooner; what satisfactory reason can he assign for delaying it so long? If the bill which he (Mr. Pitt) proposed to bring in was completely impracticable, why did the honourable gentleman not bring forward his own? Whether the bill was as impolitic as it had been represented to be, he would not take time to consider; but that every part of it was not impracticable was evident to every one.

Many clauses of it might be inexpedient, but might certainly with great ease be reduced to practice. Was it impossible to give every man an allowance in proportion to the number of his children, or to assist those who were really in sickness and distress? He would not argue at length upon the merits of the measure now proposed; but he must say it struck him as highly improper. It went to introduce legislative interference into what ought to be allowed invariably to take its natural course. The greater freedom there was allowed in every kind of mercantile transactions, the more for the benefit of all parties. It was likewise always inexpedient to frame a general law to remedy a particular evil. There was a great scarcity at the present moment; and some individuals of the labouring class might suffer from it, though he believed that class seldom felt fewer privations than at present; yet, would it be expedient to enact a law which would be universally binding and eternal in duration? Besides, the principle of the bill was inefficacious; and though it was adopted, it would have no good effect. It proposed one standard for the price of labour, without considering whether the labourer is young or old, whether sickly or robust, whether an unmarried man, or with a numerous family to support. The distresses of the poor would be relieved, not by any general law, but alone by parochial aid administered to them by those who were intimately acquainted with their situation. The honourable gentleman had remarked that the poor laws in their present state were quite sufficient if they were strictly put in execution. It rather seemed strange that they should be complete, and not contain within them some power to enforce their execution. He himself admired the system of poor laws in England, though they had of late years greatly degenerated from their original simplicity and efficacy. It had not been his intention to overturn them, but to recal them to their original principles, and to give them such subsidiary aids, as a change of circumstances had now rendered necessary. Whether he should have the honour to bring that bill again before the House he was extremely uncertain. He was, as formerly, convinced of its propriety; but many objections had been started to it, by those whose opinion he was bound to respect. Inexperienced himself in country affairs, and in the condition of the poor, he was diffident of his own opinion, and would not press the measure upon the attention of the House. But, still anxious for the good of his fellow men, he should be rejoiced to see any measure proposed which promised more effectually to relieve the indigent, and pledged himself to give it his warmest support.

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG was of opinion, that the bill which the honourable gentleman had moved for leave to bring in was alto-

gether unnecessary. By an act (which he read) the Justices were already obliged, under a penalty of 10*l.* to do nearly what was required by the honourable gentleman; and was it probable that an act was a good one which, though enforced by such severe penalties, had lain completely dormant for many years. The qualifications of the workman should be considered as well as his wages. He gave great credit to the honourable gentleman for his humane and laudable intentions, but they certainly were misapplied.

Mr. BUXTON thought that the measure would do more harm than good to those for whose benefit it was proposed; it would spread the most violent alarm among them, and tend to make them discontented. They were already extremely well off. The scarcity was great, but from the benevolent attentions of the opulent, at no time was the condition of the labourer more eligible.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE imputed the defect, not to the poor laws, but to the execution of them. Churchwardens (officers of the poor) appoint overseers; and those divide the trouble of attending to their duty into two parts; the one serving one half of the year, and the other serving the other half. This was an object for attention, and he hoped the Justices of the Peace would look to it. He thought the time critical for this bill, as the labourer's mind was not now much at ease.

Mr. ELLISON gave his decided opposition to the motion. It had pleased Providence to visit the country with a greater scarcity in 1795 than it now experienced. By the generous exertions of the higher classes, the poorer had been comfortably supported; why then should we think of now introducing a law which is proved to be unnecessary?

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that we should be careful lest in our attempts to do good we should be the authors of evil. He approved of the general tenor of the bill formerly proposed by his right honourable friend; particularly of that part of it which provides for the better education of the children of the poor, and hoped that the business would be revived by the right honourable gentleman, or some of his friends.

Mr. LEFEVRE explained.

Mr. WHITBREAD said, he was now of opinion, as he had already said, that the plan proposed on this subject by the right honourable gentleman was, in many respects, impracticable, and that in those parts which in theory might seem to be most excellent; but the right honourable gentleman might have submitted his plan to the consideration of Parliament; and if it passed at all, he was clearly of opinion it must have passed with great amendments. Having a

great respect for the plan of the honourable gentleman, for various reasons, and knowing how much more likely he was to succeed in that House, than any person who usually differed from him, he thought it right to wait for the plan which the Minister had opened, and he could not help being a little surprized at what the right honourable gentleman had said to-night; for he never until this night informed the House that any considerable objections were started to his plan; the House did not know that these objections prevented him from bringing the matter forward. The House had, therefore, no means of knowing that there was any bias on the mind of the honourable gentleman in regard to this plan. He had hoped the Minister would, at no very distant period, propose his plan to Parliament; and that was the reason why he (Mr. Whitbread) had not made this motion sooner. An honourable Member said, that what he proposed formerly, and which was of a nature similar to the present, had created in the country very unpleasant sensations. He lived a great deal in the country, and he had heard of no such sensations on that account; indeed he should be a good deal surprized if this proposition should produce any such effect; on the contrary, he believed there was nothing so likely to keep the lower classes of the people quiet, which was the object of all good Governments (and against which he knew of no complaint), as to shew them that Government were attentive to their necessities. Gentlemen took notice of charitable donations. He was ready to give the higher classes credit for their charity; but it was an afflicting sight to see the necessity of that charity. It was said, that corn was not now so dear as it was in the year 1795; he knew not how that might be, but he believed the quartern loaf was never so high in price before as at this moment. He thought it an alarming thing, that so many of the lower classes of society were doomed to subsist on charity. He knew that this was a subject which it was difficult to regulate, perhaps impolitic to try; the poor themselves knew this and felt it, and he believed, generally speaking, that they were willing to submit to the best substitute that could be devised for their ordinary food. He thought, however, that by an increase of wages some good might be done; and this was a matter upon which he felt great anxiety, because, however creditable it was to the giver, yet to the person receiving it, charity afflicted the mind of a good man, because it took away his independence, a consideration as valuable to the labourer as to the man of high rank. It had been said, that he should do much mischief by fixing the rate of wages: that was not the object for which he was moving; the object of the bill was to empower Magistrates, for a limited time, and within a limited extent, to determine the sum

below which the wages of a labouring man in full vigour should not be reduced. He would illustrate this by taking two parishes: in the one lived the person who was the proprietor of the land; such person would see to the execution of the poor laws, and by creating a rivalry among those who employed labourers, the price of labour would find its level, that is, it would come to a fair ordinary price. Within ten or fifteen miles was another parish, in which the owner of the land did not dwell: here there was no competition among the employers of labourers; consequently the price of labour was almost as low as the neighbouring farmer should chuse to make it; and there were too many instances in which the farmers oppressed the labourer; the difference of price of the labour of an individual was two shillings per week, and more, between these two parishes; and the necessaries of life were as difficult to procure in the one parish as in the other. This was the evil — now for the remedy. Suppose a Magistrate, seeing this disparity in the price of labour, were to be empowered, within a limited time, and within a certain district, to say that the labourer should not receive less than a given sum for his daily labour (that sum, of course, not to be too high, nor lower than was absolutely necessary to procure subsistence), and to be applicable of course only to a person in full health. But there were generally objections to these plans: if they were brought forward in time of scarcity, it was said to be dangerous to agitate the question; if in time of plenty, it was said to be unnecessary; so that, by this two-edged sword, the relief of the poor was to be cut in two, and the parts were to remain asunder for ever. There was no novelty in what he was now proposing; the principles of it had been recognized in various instances. But it was said that the price of labour would find its own level. How did it find its level? If labourers found they were not sufficiently paid, they combined, and the price of their labour was raised. He farther enforced the necessity of some relief, from the consideration of the multiplied statutes to prevent combinations, above forty in number; all of them operating more strongly against the labourers in any attempt to raise their wages, than against the masters who might attempt to reduce them.

Mr. ELLISON explained.

Mr. PERCIVAL said, that combination was an offence indictable at common law, and extending alike to the employers and the labourers. He would not have it go forth, that the workmen were liable to punishment for combining to raise, and the masters were not liable for combining to lower the price of labour. The law was certainly the same to both,

Mr. WHITBREAD said, he was quite aware of the law as the honourable and learned gentleman had stated it : certainly it was the same to both master and workman ; but from the nature of things, the master could much more easily prosecute the workmen, than the workmen could prosecute the masters.

The motion was then put and agreed to ; and Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Tierney, &c. were ordered to prepare and bring in the bill.

The following is a more complete and correct Statement of Mr. CANNING's SPEECH in the HOUSE OF COMMONS, on the 3d of February, than that printed in page 282 of this volume.

Mr. CANNING observed, that much as he differed from the honourable gentleman who had just sat down, in almost every argument which he had advanced, and in every inference which he had drawn, respecting the past conduct, or present views and situations of this country and of France ; there were no points on which he differed from him more entirely, than on the position which he had laid down at the beginning of his speech, that the origin and causes of the war formed no part of the present question ; and that which he had insisted upon in a subsequent part of his speech (and which, coupled with the foregoing, did indeed go to preclude all discussion upon the question to any useful purpose), that it was highly unnecessary and improper to enter into any investigation of the personal character of the present First Consul of the French Republic. Grant the honourable gentleman these two assumptions, and there was an end of our deliberations ; there was no longer a subject before the House which it could be of the smallest advantage to examine ; there was no longer any test by which the propriety or impropriety of the conduct of Government could be tried. Take away the consideration of the aggressions of France in the commencement of the war, and her conduct during its continuance ; and take away, at the same time, the liberty of inquiring freely into the grounds and justice of the pretensions put forward by the person now at the head of the French Government ; and what remained, by which to estimate the comparative policy of refusing, or of having accepted, the overtures for negotiation ? How were the House to judge of what would be the conduct of France under the present circumstances, but by a review of what had been her conduct hitherto ? By what means were they to decide how far the power, and the personal dispositions, of the present Chief Ruler of France super-

ceded the necessity of recurring to the examination of the conduct of France under its preceding revolutionary Governments, unless they were permitted to inquire, in the best way that they could, into the probable sincerity of those dispositions, and the probable stability of the power for giving them effect?

It was singular, however, that while the honourable gentleman denied to the side of the House on which he sat the right of reviewing the past transactions of France with foreign nations, and with this country, and the advantage of contrasting the professions of the Chief Consul with his former principles and conduct: he had himself no scruple in taking that liberty with the character of his own country, which he thought unwarrantable in respect to that of the enemy; and he felt no delicacy in going back to the crimes and errors of monarchical France, and depicting the dangers which Europe had in former times had to dread from the overweening ambition, and tyrannical usurpations of Louis XIV. though he thought any such animadversion upon republican France no way to be justified, and considered the usurpation of Bonaparte as privileged to an exemption from censure or inquiry.

The conduct of Great Britain in the earlier part of the war, the honourable gentleman declared to have been so unprincipled, and her aggressions and insults against neutral and unoffending nations so gross and outrageous, that nothing of what was imputed to France could stand in competition with it, in point of enormity. No violation of the law of nations, no infringement of rights, nor infliction of calamities, with which France was charged, could, in the eyes of the honourable gentleman, equal the glaring injustice and oppression of our conduct towards Genoa and Tuscany. The transactions respecting Genoa and Tuscany, Mr. Canning observed, had been made the ground of much unjust accusation, and appeared to him to have been wholly misunderstood. The short statement of that which related to Genoa was simply this: Genoa was considered, at the beginning of the war, as strictly neutral, and as such, was respected by His Majesty's fleet in the Mediterranean, until it was found that, in spite of its pretended neutrality, the Genoese Government allowed France to derive constant and large supplies of provisions for its armies, from their Genoese territory; and that the repeated friendly remonstrances of the Commander of His Majesty's fleet, and of his Minister at Genoa, had been employed in vain to prevent the repetition and continuance of a practice, which all the laws of civilized war gave them a full right to complain of as a departure from neutrality. When these admonitions had proved ineffectual, recourse was had, and justly, to threats; which threats,

however, be it remembered, were never carried into execution: and, perhaps, the only thing with which His Majesty's Government had to reproach itself, within the whole of this business, was, that it did not allow the system of intimidation to be pursued far enough to answer, for any length of time, its justifiable purpose; nor was there any thing that could be represented as contrary to the laws and rights of nations in what was done, or what was threatened on this occasion; nor any thing that could be considered as even harsh and rigorous, except, indeed, by those who conceived that the French had a privilege, uniformly, and in every case, to exact to the full, not the observance of the duties of neutrality towards them, but the violation of them in their own favour, and that in proportion as France was exorbitant in her demands, we were to be humble and self-denying; that we were to take as an excuse, from every neutral State that might chuse to conciliate France by favour and partiality, the assertion, that truly they could not help it; that France was so pressing, and so peremptory, that they were obliged to consult their own safety by concession: in short, that we were to submit to all the disadvantages of a strict and scrupulous forbearance on our part, while France enjoyed all the advantages of unqualified exaction; and that, in compassion to the weakness of the States who could not preserve their line of duty towards us, we were to omit every opportunity of doing justice to ourselves. A system of miserable imbecility which he did not wonder France should be loud in preaching, in order to reserve to herself exclusively, the right of departing from it in every instance; but one which he trusted this country would never adopt, so long as it had a just sense of its own rights, and power to assert and to enforce them.

With regard to Tuscany, much the same observations would apply. France had continued to derive every assistance, and England felt every inconvenience in the conduct of the war, from the ill-observed neutrality, and partial policy of Tuscany; a partiality not more disadvantageous to the cause in which England was engaged, than it was manifestly prejudicial in its effects, to the security of the Grand Duke's Government, and to the real interests of his dominions. Tuscany had been from the beginning of the war, the center of the French conspiracy against the peace and independence of all Italy; and even in the Councils of the Grand Duke himself, it was justly apprehended that there had penetrated a degree of French influence, dangerous alike to his own States, and to all his neighbours. Under these circumstances Great Britain was not only justified, but was called upon to assert her own right to be treated with fairness and impartiality, and was warranted in

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employing the most peremptory terms to enforce the respect which was due to her, and in representing amicably, but forcibly, to the Tuscan Government, the double danger in which it was daily involving itself, from the resentment of the allies on the one hand, and the overbearing domination of France on the other. Representations to this effect certainly were made by Lord Hervey, then His Majesty's Minister at Florence: and if, in executing the orders of this Court, Lord Hervey was hurried by his zeal for the service of his Sovereign, and for the great cause in which England and her allies were embarked, into expressions of any thing like intemperance or disrespect, it ought not to be forgotten, that upon the statement of this circumstance, accompanied with the expression of the Grand Duke's displeasure, and desire that Lord Hervey should be recalled, that desire was instantly complied with, Lord Hervey was immediately recalled; and thus the best and most satisfactory reparation was made to the Government of Tuscany, and the character of the Government of England completely cleared. Nor was this, however, all: the conduct of Lord Hervey, though admitted to be such as to occasion this complaint of the Court of Tuscany, and to draw down upon him, in consequence, this mark of disapprobation of his own Court, was yet not entirely such as it is represented in certain publications, from which, in this, as in other instances, the honourable gentlemen on the other side of the House probably derived the information, on which they thought it expedient to ground their charges against the powers at war with France. In the same collection of State papers, which contains the treaty of Pavia, and the secret articles of the treaty of Pilnitz, both gross and impudent fabrications, without the shadow of foundation, or the pretence of authority; in that same publication, resting on similar grounds of authenticity, is even to be found a pretended note from Lord Hervey, addressed directly, and personally, to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, of which it was sufficient to say, that no such note ever was presented; no such note ever was transmitted from Lord Harvey to this Court; nor was it ever heard of by any person connected with the Government of this country, until it made its appearance in the same volume with the treaty of Pavia and Pilnitz. [Mr. Canning here read a copy of a paper, purporting to be a note from Lord Hervey to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, dated September 2, 1793.] He read this note, he said, not as conceiving that the circumstance of such a fabrication having been contrived, did away all ground of complaint against Lord Hervey. The complaint he had admitted to have existed; and it had been satisfied by Lord Harvey's recall. But he did think that this, coupled with the other instances to which

he had referred, of the spurious treaties of Pavia and Pilnitz, might have the effect of making gentlemen a little cautious in future how they adopted, and relied upon as authentic State papers, whatever trash it might please the friends of France to publish as such, for the justification of her cause.

He had one word more to add upon the subject of Tuscany. The honourable gentleman had appeared to rely upon the conduct of Great Britain, in this instance, not only as a *set-off* against the outrageous proceedings of France towards neutral nations, but as a ground of her proceedings towards Tuscany itself in subsequent periods of the war, particularly in the invasion of Leghorn, and the seizure of British property there in 1797. He had already, he trusted, done away the impression of the honourable gentleman's argument in the former respect, by shewing that Great Britain had not conducted herself so flagrantly as was represented, and that, in the instance in which her Minister had outstepped the line of his instructions, he had, with the condescension becoming a great country in its intercourse with a weaker State (whose very sense of its own weakness might, perhaps, make its feelings the more irritable, and its honour the more jealous), done every thing in her power to atone for the offence. In other respects, France can derive no defence from the conduct of Great Britain; for, subsequently to all that passed on this occasion through the medium of Lord Jervcy, and, consequently, to Tuscany's being considered by France as having become a party in the war, against her, a separate treaty of peace was concluded at Paris between the Grand Duke and the French Republic. And it was in violation of this treaty, that the French army under General Bonaparte took possession of Leghorn, and seized and confiscated British property to an immense amount, deposited there under the protection and guarantee of Tuscan neutrality; a violation of the laws of neutrality almost unparalleled in extent and atrocity, except by other examples to be found in the conduct of the French themselves, and an outrage for which the Government that permitted, or, what is in strictness the same thing, could not prevent it, is responsible to the Government whose subjects have suffered by it; which, therefore, gave to His Majesty, if he had chosen to make use of it, full right of reprisal, and which gives to the moderation observed since in the conduct of Great Britain towards Tuscany, a character of the greatest magnanimity, generosity, and forbearance.

After all, however, if it were in other respects proper and reasonable to retrace the conduct of France at former periods of the war, and if the conduct of Great Britain, in regard to other nations, left

them at liberty to do so, the honourable gentleman had contended, that the Ministers had given up all right to look back, by entering into a negotiation at Paris, and afterwards at Lisle. And he had farther insisted, that the declarations published in His Majesty's name, at the conclusion of each of those negotiations, had bound the Government of this country to enter into negotiation anew, at least to receive overtures for peace, whenever the enemy might shew a readiness to treat with them. The reasoning (Mr. Canning said) seemed to him to be by no means correct. This pledge given by the declarations of His Majesty could in no fair construction be made to apply so widely and so eternally as the honourable gentleman was desirous of having it believed. As to the declaration made after the Paris negotiation, whatever might be the promises held forth in future negotiation, they were fully and entirely satisfied, and the pledge contained in them entirely redeemed, by entering into the negotiation at Lisle. And as to that which was published after the negotiation at Lisle, it was not only not of the vague and unlimited nature, which the honourable gentleman described, but it was in truth more limited by circumstances, and more precise in the extent and duration of its obligation than the former. For what was the state of the circumstances under which that declaration was published? Lord Malmesbury had been empowered to offer the terms of peace at Lisle, so liberal, so advantageous, to the enemy, that nothing, in fact, but the real and pressing necessity for peace which (from various causes which he should not detail, but which had been alluded to by his right honourable friend, Mr. Dundas) was felt in this country, could have justified the government in foregoing them: and that it was not unreasonably to be apprehended, that any favourable change in the circumstances of the country might induce the government to seize an opportunity of departing from them. Such, however, was not the intention or the policy of government. A favourable change had taken place in the circumstances of the country; for, soon after the breaking off of the conferences at Lisle, and the sending away of Lord Malmesbury, it had pleased Providence to bless His Majesty's arms with a signal victory over the fleet of one of his enemies. The effect of this victory was to secure, in a great measure, the safety of the country, and to raise the spirits of the people certainly in a very considerable degree. But still the King's Ministers thought peace upon the whole desirable; and feeling this, and apprehending, at the same time, that the enemy would naturally conclude that the advantage so recently gained must of necessity have raised our terms, they thought it expedient to give them to understand that such was not

the case—that even after the victory of Lord Duncan they were ready to make peace upon the same terms which they had offered before, and, for this purpose, the declaration was published. The enemy might have taken them at their word at the time: fortunately, he did not. But was it to be argued, that such a declaration, made under such circumstances, and with such a view, was to be everlastingly binding? That because one victory, because a favourable change, in one particular, of the situation of this country, did not alter the opinion of Ministers as to the preferableness of peace to war (a choice of evils, God knows, as such a peace must have been), and did not affect the moderation of their terms, therefore they were to be held for ever to the words, not the spirit, of their proposition; were never to be at liberty to vary their tone with the variation of circumstances, both in this country, and in the situation of the enemy, but were bound to be always forthcoming, when the enemy pleases to call upon them, and to make at all times the worst terms possible for Great Britain, because there had been a period when a peace, even on terms so bad, was thought preferable to the continuance of the war? Surely there was not common fairness, or reason, in such a mode of argument; nor would there be common sense in such a mode of conduct!

As little could it be argued, that the having treated with revolutionary France at all, precluded Ministers for ever from considering the internal state of that country as a discouragement to negotiation. What! because they had already felt, in the abrupt and insulting termination of the negotiation at Lisfe (of Paris he would say nothing), what it was to treat with a revolutionary government; were they, therefore, of course, bound to treat immediately and eagerly with every new government, the instant that it presented itself to their view? Was the mere fact of an experiment having been tried, and having failed, of itself a sufficient inducement to try it again? Were the government bound to this, if circumstances continued the same, and afforded, therefore, only the same chance of success? And were they equally bound to it in case of a change? Was there now a change in the circumstances or dispositions of the enemy, which warranted the expectation that the chance of success would now be greater? And if there were so, how were they to ascertain it, but by that very examination and comparison of the present situation of France, and the French Government, with that which had before baffled their endeavours after peace; which examination and comparison the honourable gentleman had warned the House not to pursue?

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been effected in the principles and temper of France, by the alteration of form of government and of persons, was precisely the question upon which the Government of this country had to make up its opinion, before it could safely, or prudently, or consistently, entertain any proposal for negotiation. It was precisely that upon which it was impossible to make up any rational opinion, until they should have seen trial of the new establishment; a trial only to be decided by what was so justly insisted upon in the official note returned in answer to General Bonaparte's letters to His Majesty, "experience and the evidence of facts."

But this distrust of the new Government the honourable gentleman professed to believe to be in a great measure affected, and to be put forward only in order to afford an opportunity for declaring the marked and exclusive predilection of Ministers for the antient Monarchy of France; and nothing could, in the honourable gentleman's opinion, be more impolitic, as well as more outrageously insulting, to the feelings of the people of France, than the avowal of a desire to see the antient Monarchy restored. Undoubtedly such a desire was plainly and distinctly avowed; and, for his part, Mr. Canning said, he was at a loss to conceive what there was in the avowal that could irritate the feelings of Frenchmen. If, indeed, it was possible to imagine, that there still existed in France a large body of sincere, bigotted, fanatical lovers of republicanism, of persons who gravely believed in the purity and perfection of the republican principle, as applicable, or as ever having been applied to the government of France, under any of its successive revolutions, who still looked with faith and hope to the preservation and propagation of their principles, and considered nothing but the return of Monarchy as likely to oppose their progress, or diminish their influence and operation; if such a race of madmen yet were to be found, whose eyes and understandings the whole series of tyrannies from Robespierre and Bonaparte had not been sufficient to open; with them, he must confess that the expression of a wish for the restoration of the old legitimate government might be unpopular; their feelings such a proposition might irritate. But, he confessed, he could not easily persuade himself that such a race of men could be very numerous either in France or elsewhere. And if, as was more probable, the general and prevailing feeling throughout France was that of weariness and disgust at the scenes of horror and calamity through which they had passed; if they now began to see, with regret and compunction, that, after ten years of sufferings and of crimes, of miseries inflicted upon others, and heaped upon themselves, after wading through seas of blood in pursuit of the empty

form of liberty which still eluded their grasp, the sole result of their endeavours to shake off the government, which they were once taught to think so oppressive, had been no other than the subjecting themselves to a tyranny ten thousand times more galling; that they had succeeded only in exchanging the sceptre for the sword; that, instead of eradicating Monarchy, they had stripped it of all that made it venerable, and of all that made it useful, of all that recommended it in theory, and all that softened it in practice; had stripped it of its stability, its legitimacy, and its limitations; if such were now the reflections of all thinking men in that unhappy country, what reason was there to apprehend that they would shrink from the mention of their antient government? That they would withhold their homage from a known and mitigated monarchy, to pay it to a frightful and jealous usurpation? That they would hold sacred their allegiance to a shapeless mockery of royalty, with "the likeness of a kingly crown" upon its head, and refuse it to that substantial and protective power, under which they have flourished for ages, in respect abroad and in happiness at home? Was it not rather to be presumed, that they had now begun to look with anxious desire for a termination to their calamities, in such an order of things as alone could terminate them in peace and security? Was it not probable—was it not certain—did not every man, who heard him, know from his own experience, that the first idea suggested by Bonaparte's successful usurpation, was, that it was a step to the restoration of Monarchy? Was it not obvious to every person, that from the government of one man, to that of a lawful King, was a transition neither so strange nor so difficult, as from any of the more complicated constitutions which had risen and fallen in France since the abolition of the Monarchy? And, even now, though to point out the pacific stages by which the change was to be brought about might be by no means easy, was there any human being who did not feel that Monarchy was brought more within view than it had been at any period since the beginning of the Revolution? That those who wished it felt it more confident in their hopes; that those who dreaded its return yet thought it more probable, and might be more ready to compromise with it: and that, therefore, to put the case of the re-establishment of Monarchy as that in which peace would become easy and certain, was to specify not only the most desirable but the most probable termination of the war, and that which, according to all human calculation, might be most near at hand.

But an apprehension was expressed, that in stating the desire of this government for the restoration of Monarchy in France, a pledge was given to the royalists that peace should never be made at all,

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until Monarchy was restored. It was feared, that Government were thus making common cause with the royalists, and implicating the fortunes of this country in the issue of a contest in which substantially it had no real concern. Not so: the language of the official note was guarded carefully in this point; and so little did it justify the conclusion that common cause was made with the royalists to the extent described, that in other comments upon the note, which he had seen, a directly contrary effect was stated as likely to be produced by it: namely, that the intimation of other possible cases in which peace might be made by this country with France, would prevent the royalist party from building any hope at all upon the good wishes of Great Britain. The truth, however, lay between both; and it might, perhaps, be sufficient to answer to both objections, that the royalists were not deceived as to what was the true intention of government, and that they were satisfied with it. The royalists of France, and the government of this country, had undoubtedly a common object, but they had different degrees of interest in the attainment of it, and proportioned to those different degrees of interest, might be the degrees of their respective exertions and perseverance in the pursuit. So far, however, as they were both to proceed, they might safely and beneficially proceed together. It was a partnership in which the royalists had necessarily embarked their whole fortune; this country a part only; and the terms of the connection resulting from these combined, but unequal interests, were distinctly understood. If we could bring the royalists through by the same efforts by which we were working for our own advantage, surely it was highly useful, and honourable, and humane to do so: but we were not pledged to persevere beyond what we thought prudent on our own account; we might withdraw at any time, when our own objects were accomplished, or when we saw, or thought we saw, that they were unattainable, without greater risk than it appeared to us advisable to incur; and we might withdraw without reproach, and without dishonesty. We had no share in bringing the royalists into the contest, though finding them at our side, we were bound in honour, and humanity, to assist them, as far as our ways lay together; but while we owed thus much to them, we did not, nor did they, forget that we owed *all* to ourselves.

Next, however, according to the honourable gentleman's arguments, it was to be considered that this country had, in fact, no interest whatever in the re-establishment of Monarchy in France: nay, that it was rather an event to be looked at with jealousy and apprehension. This assertion, though he had heard of its being

made and maintained in other places, Mr. Canning said, he could hardly believe to be made with seriousness. Good God! Had Great Britain, had the world no interest in the re-establishment of order, of a known, defined, understood, experienced, legitimate order of things, in the room of a system of disorder, anarchy, and impiety, not more afflicting to France, than it was incompatible, as had been proved by long and painful experience, with the security of every other government upon earth? Was it nothing to this country, looking to peace as its object, whether she should be able to conclude a peace on which she could rely, and under which she could repose with confidence; a peace which should bring with it the renewal of safe communication, of commercial intercourse, of reciprocal trust and benefit; or, whether she should only rest on her arms in hourly expectation of being again summoned to war, in defence of her dearest interests? And did the honourable gentleman suppose, that such a peace as was alone worth having, as alone could be maintained without all the cost, and more than all the dangers of war, could rest on any other grounds than the restoration of such an order of things in France as might ensure the return of credit and stability to the government, and of security for property and of honest industry, and commercial morality amongst the people?

The expression, therefore, of an anxious wish for the re-establishment of the French Monarchy, did not appear to him to be either so dangerous in the effect that it might produce in France, nor so extravagant with respect to the interests of Great Britain. But here the honourable gentleman had taken a very extraordinary ground indeed; and in his zeal to combat the idea of restoring Monarchy, he had far outstepped the rule of forbearance, with respect to the past conduct of France, which he had prescribed for those who differed from him upon the question, and had gone into a laboured dissertation on the dangers with which Monarchy, in the House of Bourbon, had in old times threatened this country and all Europe. The mind of that man must be singularly constituted, who, living in such times as the present, could overlook all the dangers actually impending, and all those which had recently overwhelmed the world, from the profligate aggressions and tyranny of Republican France; and who yet trembled with apprehension at the recollection of the ambitious projects of Louis XIV. The honourable gentleman had referred to the projects of that Monarch, which had threatened the independence of Europe, a hundred years ago; and had spoken of them in a tone which shewed, that he thought the independence of Europe matter of concern, and the overweening ambition of France, matter of dread to this country: and he had spoken, in the

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manner which it deserved, of the stand made by King William in defence of the liberties of this country, and of Europe. He agreed with the honourable gentleman, in looking back with pride to that distinguished period of English history. He found in that period much to praise; wisdom and firmness in our councils, skill in our generals, valour in our armies: but he found nothing that delighted him more, or that he would rather recommend to the admiration of the honourable gentleman, and his friends, than the cordial support afforded by the Commons of Great Britain to their Sovereign, in the prosecution of a war, carried on for the true interests, the honour and safety of their country, against the rapacious, insolent, and domineering ambition of France. [*Mr. Canning here read an address of the House of Commons to King William, in the year 1696, the 8th year of the war, containing expressions of their determination to support His Majesty to the utmost, "till he should be able to obtain by war, a safe and honourable peace."*] This example, was, indeed, he said, worthy of being quoted, and worthy of all the praise bestowed upon the exertions of that reign, by the honourable gentleman. But, after all, what did the honourable gentleman gain to his argument, by referring to the days of Louis XIV, and by citing the precedent of the noble struggle maintained by this country, during the reign of King William, and his successor, against France? He reminded us, it was true, what were the efforts, and what were the sacrifices which the people of England had thought themselves bound to make in that contest. What was the inference? Why, that in a contest, incalculably more arduous, and involving in its issue interests infinitely more important, we should make, at least, equal efforts, and display, at least, equal perseverance? What was at any time the specific danger from the ambition of Louis XIV. that called forth all the energy of this country? First, generally, his unprincipled ambition; latterly, war was carried on against him because there was a danger that France would acquire an influence in the councils of Spain. An influence in the councils of Spain! Would to God such were the only danger that we had now to apprehend! Yet for this, the honourable gentleman thought war was justly and nobly carried on! And now—Oh! now, there was no reason, no pretext for carrying on war at all; no danger now of French influence in Spain!—France intermeddle in the concerns of Spain now! France command the treasures, dispose of the fleets, direct the policy of the Spanish Monarchy now! Not she; she did not presume to entertain projects so ambitious. Spain indeed! She had nothing to do with Spain; nor with Holland; nor with the Netherlands; nor with Switzerland; nor with Germany; nor with Italy (with Italy,

God be thanked! not much); nor with Egypt. There was nothing now to fear from her power; nothing now to suspect from her intrigues; no danger to the balance of Europe; no hazard to the liberties, the religion, the constitutions of the several states and kingdoms of the world!

If, however, there were no reason for carrying on the war, it was not, therefore, the less necessary to inquire what possibility there was of making, and what chance for securing peace. And this was a question which unfortunately could not be agitated, without touching upon the second topic, which the honourable gentleman had prohibited, the personal character and conduct of the First Consul of the French Republic. On what ground, indeed, the honourable gentleman had thought himself warranted in precluding such a discussion, it was not easy to conceive. The discussion was not of our seeking. The First Consul voluntarily forced himself upon our observation, in a way that made it impossible for us to turn aside, and to pretend not to see him. He told us plainly, that if we had to do with France at all, we must have to do with *him*, as centering in his own person all that was stable, all that was authoritative, all that was responsible to foreign countries, in the new government of France. "If there be power in France, it is in *me*; if there be faith in France, in *me* must you look for it; if you make peace with France, *my* word, *my* character, *my* personal dispositions must be your sole, and sufficient security." Such was the language of the First Consul to His Majesty and his Government; and when, in compliance with such an invitation, it was proposed to examine the foundation and validity of the only security thus offered to us, the honourable gentleman stepped in, and told the House, that such an examination was highly indecorous and unnecessary. It might give offence, it seemed, to the First Consul; it was personal and indelicate; and he knew not what other terms of fine feeling were applied to it. Now, first, as to the fear of giving offence to the First Consul himself, or to France: the honourable gentleman appeared to have very ill understood to what degree the temper of France was captious and irritable, in respect to the character of its existing, or expired governments; otherwise the honourable gentleman, with that delicacy which he professed to wish to observe, and that fear of offending, which dictated his warning to that side of the House, would not have indulged himself in many parts of the speech which he had made that day. For did the honourable gentleman imagine, that it was to their Government of the present hour, or to that which Bonaparte had destroyed to erect this, or to that upon the ruins of which he had erected that which he had now de-

stroyed, or to any one of the nine or ten immediately preceding governments, that France limited the privilege and sacredness, which made it almost blasphemy to condemn their proceedings? No such thing; the honourable gentleman, himself, in reviling the ambition of the antient government of France, had as much sinned against the majesty of the French nation, as if he had presumed to traduce Brissot, or Robespierre, or any of the latter tyrants who swept them to the scaffold, and were swept by their successors to the same scaffold in their turn. The honourable gentleman has, indeed, committed his country most rashly, by such intemperate language against Louis XIV. Does he not know, or had he forgotten at the moment, that Rome was sacked and pillaged the other day, to avenge the manes of *Vercengetrix* (or some such name), a King of the Gauls, who flourished some time before Louis XIV. and whom Julius Cæsar was discovered to have aggrieved in a scandalous manner; and that to reclaim the trophies won from the Burgundians, was one of the pretexts alledged for the invasion of Switzerland? Let not, therefore, the honourable gentleman imagine, that the lapse of near a century, since the time of Louis XIV. would bar France, in her own good time, from avenging the wrongs done to his memory. France is not so forgetful, *nullum tempus occurrit*. Her vengeance might sleep, indeed; but opportunity would awaken it, and could we be caught as fairly off our guard, as weak and as inviting as Rome or as Switzerland (which might readily be the case if we would accept the counsel of the honourable gentleman opposite, and make peace, or armistice, without examination or delay), the honourable gentleman's abuse of Louis XIV. would be as good a plea as any other, for declaring war against us, and pursuing it to our ruin.

Forced, however, as we were, at all hazards, to sift pretty narrowly the character and conduct of the present Ruler of France, it was some satisfaction that we had before-hand so much of what was the only testimony to be relied on, that of "experience and the evidence of facts," to guide our judgment, and aid our decision upon the subject. Mr. Canning said, he would not follow his right honourable friend (Mr. Dundas), through the detail of Bonaparte's conduct, with regard to foreign States, in every transaction in which he had been engaged, from his first appearance at the head of the army of Italy, to his late disgraceful flight from the army of Egypt. The facts were before the House; they were fresh in every body's recollection. To these facts what testimony was opposed: First, the declaration of Bonaparte himself, swearing by himself, no doubt, as was the custom and the right of so transcendent a

personage; and secondly, his Minister, M. Talleyrand. Talleyrand, to be sure, was an admirable witness to character in matter of negotiation. Talleyrand certainly had proved, that he knew well how to make a treaty; but he seemed to be quite lost in admiration of Bonaparte's talents for keeping one. This was a thing of which he had no idea. "The old Directory and I," said Talleyrand, "knew pretty well how to set about concluding a treaty; there was the American treaty, which all the world knows; the Portugal treaty too; both were managed cleverly enough in the making; but as to the keeping them, that is quite another thing. There, indeed, we had no skill, nor talent: but here, here is a man, who keeps treaties as well as makes them; a perfect phenomenon in the diplomacy of France."

Such was the testimony that Talleyrand could furnish on behalf of Bonaparte. For that which Bonaparte could give in favour of himself, it fortunately was not necessary to rest on conjecture or inference. Fortunately the chance of war had thrown into our hands documents, of which the authenticity could not be questioned, and in which the characters of fraud, perjury, treachery, and deliberate breach of faith, were written in Bonaparte's own hand against himself. He alluded to the letters lately intercepted on their passage from Egypt.

And here he must take some notice of the remarks of the honourable gentleman, and of those which he understood had been made in other places on the publication of those letters. It had been argued, that there was something base and illiberal, something contrary to the rights of mitigated war, and to the practice of civilized nations, in publishing letters of an enemy, which the chance of war had thrown into our hands. He would not enter into the theory of this question, because, being a question of practical policy, it could be much better settled by a reference to the conduct of the most civilized countries in their best times. He apprehended the honourable gentlemen opposite would not dispute the claim of their own country (for it was the conduct of Great Britain that he meant to quote) to the qualification which he had bestowed upon it: and he was confident that they would agree with him as to his character of the particular period of our history, to which he referred; for it was one which they were themselves extremely fond of citing with expressions of high commendation, for reasons sufficiently obvious; it was the year 1759, the period of the glorious war carried on under the administration of the father of his right honourable friend who sat beside him (Mr. Pitt). The paper which he held in his

hand, contained an extract from the *London Gazette*, from Tuesday, Aug. 14, to Saturday, Aug. 18, 1759.

"Among the papers which were taken at Detmold on the 5th instant, by His Majesty's light troops, an original letter is found from the Marshal Duc de Belleisle, to Marshal Contades, dated Versailles, July 23d, 1759, in which there is the following passage."

Then followed a passage extracted from the letter, with which it was not necessary to trouble the House. In the *London Gazette Extraordinary*, of Friday, October 12, in the same year, were published some intercepted letters taken in the East Indies, which were still more in point, from the substance of their contents, as well as from the precedent of publication. The first was,

"Translation of an Intercepted Letter from M. Lally to M. Lerpit."

Another was,

"Translation of a Letter, intercepted going from Pondicherry to Masulipatam:"

In which there were some passages so curious, when compared with those letters from Egypt, which have lately been published, that he believed the House would forgive him, if he took up a few minutes of their time in reading a part of it to them; it was as follows:

"Shall I mention to you our unfortunate expedition to Tanjore? Bad news is interesting, but painful to the writer The army has suffered greatly from hunger, thirst, watching, and fatigue Poor French! What a situation are we in! What projects we thought ourselves capable of executing, and how are we disappointed! . . . I pity our General. He must be extremely embarrassed, notwithstanding his extensive genius, without money or fleet; his troops very discontented, his reputation declining What will become of us? They say M. de Bussi is coming. Let him make haste. Let him bring men, and especially money, without which he will only increase our misery. The country, being ruined, scarce affords us any provisions Above twenty officers of different corps have gone on board the fleet. If M. Lally had given permission to depart, the greatest part of them would have embarked: So greatly are these gentlemen disgusted with their situation!"

Would not any person who heard this, without being told from whence it came, be persuaded that it was, in fact, one of the late interceptions from Egypt; when, at least as much as at Pondicherry in 1759, the army have reason to be "disgusted with their situation." Was there any longer any doubt as to the strict precedent propriety of availing ourselves of every information of such a sort, which came into our power? or would a stand now be

made (it was very possible) that against France, and especially against Bonaparte himself, such an advantage was ungenerous? Such, perhaps, might be the argument; for he had heard that in another place it had been gravely declared, that the publisher of Bonaparte's letters must have a worse heart than the writer of them. These were harsh words; but when he looked a little farther, and found the same orator arguing, that the scarcity proceeded from the war, he had felt that an imputation, however severe, from such an arguer was not much to be regarded. But, in truth, did Bonaparte merit for the goodness of his heart, a special exemption from the fair advantages arising out of the fortune of war? Had he so conducted himself as to deserve such a compliment? Perhaps an extract (a very short one) which he would take the liberty to read from the *Moniteur* of the 19th Pluviose, 5th year (some time in January, 1797), would settle this point, as completely as the London Gazette had settled the other.

“ Copy of a Letter from General Bonaparte, Commander in Chief of the Army of Italy, to the Executive Directory.

“ *Verona, 1 Pluviose, 5th year.*

“ Citizens Directors, You will find enclosed some intercepted letters, which are extremely interesting; as you will see in them the obstinate bad faith of the Court of Rome.”

Then followed the publication at length of a letter from the Cardinal Secretary of State at Rome, to Monsignor Albani (the Nuncio) at Vienna; and the House would remember that Rome was not then actually at war with the French Republic. And this was the man entitled to peculiar delicacy, against whom the just rights of war ought not to be enforced!

But in defiance of the proofs arising out of Bonaparte's own testimony, thus fortunately produced against himself, and in contradiction to all that had been stated by his right honourable friend (Mr. Dundas), the honourable gentleman thought it sufficient to maintain that Bonaparte had not in point of fact violated the treaty of Campo Formio. Undoubtedly the honourable gentleman was right. Bonaparte did not violate the treaty of Campo Formio. But what then? what ground for triumph did the honourable gentleman find in this concession? The honourable gentleman must have mistaken his right honourable friend's meaning, if he supposed that the whole of his argument was liable to be overthrown by the production of a single instance of a treaty not broken by Bonaparte. If, indeed, his right honourable friend had asserted that France had never broken a treaty without Bonaparte; if the tenor of his argument had been that Bonaparte was a necessary ingredient in every

breach of treaty ; then, to be sure, to find one which had been broken by France without his agency, might be matter of high controversial triumph. But his right honourable friend had asserted no such thing. He had merely asserted that Bonaparte had never kept a treaty on his part ; and that France on her's had left none unviolated ; but that she had employed Bonaparte to violate them *all*, that she had been so poor in resources as to be able to find but one instrument for such complicated and multiplied acts of wickedness, it had never entered into his right honourable friend's head to assert.

He was, however, very glad that the honourable gentleman had recalled the attention of the House to the treaty of Campo Formio : because, though not affording an instance of breach of treaty on the part of Bonaparte, it was much more material to be considered as affording the instance to which Bonaparte himself referred with so much confidence, of the dispositions already manifested by him, not for peace simply, but for a *general* pacification. The First Consul, in his letter to His Majesty, had declared, that His Majesty “ could only see in this overture his personal desire to contribute for the *second* time, to a *general* pacification.” Talleyrand, in his reply to Lord Grenville's note, had insisted upon the same topic, and the honourable gentleman on the other side, who took all that Bonaparte and Talleyrand said for gospel, had not been slow in expressing his persuasion, that it was for a *general* pacification that treaty was now proposed. Now, when a man talked of doing a thing for the *second* time, he luckily gave some clue for finding his real meaning ; for as much as to form some idea how he would do it in the *second* time, it was only necessary to look back, and see how he had done it the *first*. In this point of view the treaty of Campo Formio did indeed afford an admirable test of Bonaparte's notions of *general* pacification. At the time when the treaty of Campo Formio was negotiated, the powers still at war with France, beside Austria, were Great Britain, and as the ally of Great Britain, Portugal. The preliminaries of Leoben were signed by Bonaparte, in April 1797. The treaty of Campo Formio, founded on these preliminaries (he would not here distract the attention of the House by noticing the wide departure in the treaty from the preliminaries signed at Leoben, nor by remarking on the plea by which that departure was defended on the part of France, namely, that in framing those preliminaries, advantage had been taken of the generosity of the French Republic—these were shades of faithlessness scarce worth mentioning), the treaty of Campo Formio was concluded in the course of the summer. In the same summer, Great Britain proposed to treat for peace ; and the conferences at Lisle were opened. Portugal also,

besides that she was included in the proposals of Great Britain, opened a separate treaty for herself. What then was the consequence? peace made with Austria, England and Portugal, the only remaining powers at war, actually engaged in negotiation;—one should have imagined that the work of general pacification would have gone smoothly on; and that Bonaparte, whose interest was paramount in France at that moment, might easily have obtained his heart's desire. But no—the Revolution of the 4th of September took place;—a Revolution, which, be it remarked, could not be brought about without the consent of Bonaparte, which Barras, then the intimate friend and patron of Bonaparte, planned, which Augereau was sent from Bonaparte's army to Paris to conduct, and thereby ended the negotiations at Lisle, and the treaty with Portugal; the British Minister was dismissed, the Portuguese Minister imprisoned;—and threats of renewed and interminable war, were the only answers made to the persevering offers of new negotiation on the part of this country. Such was the conduct and success of Bonaparte's first fond attempt at general pacification; and lest any doubt should be entertained of his perfect satisfaction in the issue, he shortly after pursued his favourite plan of peace, by conducting an army, destined against the British possessions in the East, into Egypt, the territory of a partial and friendly power; and thus both secured the continuance of the war with England, and wantonly added a new enemy to the list of the enemies of France.

If such was the state of the transaction to which we were so confidently referred, as containing undoubted proofs of the dispositions avowed by the First Consul, and as affording the precedent which he meant to follow in the negotiation now proposed to us—whatever advantage we might have to accuse ourselves of having lost by refusing to listen to his overtures, was it reasonable to suppose, that of all things in the world, we had thrown away an opportunity of general pacification? was it not rather probable, was it not evident, that as, in the former instance, having detached Austria from the coalition, the whole force of France was bent against the interests of this country; so now it was intended merely to make sure of our inactivity by entangling us in negotiation, in order that the undivided efforts of the government of France might be directed against the Court of Vienna?—It was our turn now to have a truce, while the power of Austria should be exhausted;—as Austria had formerly been allowed to breathe, while the full vengeance of France was let loose against Great Britain:—and as, when that experiment had been tried, Austria was speedily forced back into the war—what

right had we to flatter ourselves that our repose would have been permitted to be more secure, or of longer continuance?

There remained another consideration personal to the First Consul, which, with the honourable gentleman's permission, it was impossible to leave wholly out of the question; and this was the stability of Government; without which, it was plain, that there could be no security for any peace which we might conclude with him at the present moment. Upon this point it could not be necessary to say much. Every probability, every presumption, was obviously against the permanence of a power, which rested on none of the known and intelligent principles, on which a government had ever yet been supported;—a power possessed by Republicans, which was built upon the wreck and ruins of every principle of freedom; a power professing to emanate from the people, which no one class or description of the people had either a share in creating, or an interest in preserving; a despotism without the sanction of prescription, or the mitigation of established laws, or usages, or manners; a military despotism proposing to maintain itself by universal peace: these were anomalies, which it became those gentlemen to explain, and to reconcile to common understandings; to reconcile, if they could with past experience, or with any reasonable theory, when they contended for the stability of the new government in France; or was there some high and mysterious principle of preservation, such as the vulgar and uninitiated could not comprehend, which would watch over the destinies of Bonaparte? was it, that owing his Crown, as Macbeth was described to owe his, “to fate and metaphysical aid;”—it was expected that the “metaphysical aid” of Sieyes, who had helped him to the Crown, would be able, under all chances, to keep it safe upon his head? that there was some charm contrived by that “weird” Abbé, which would baffle all combinations that “man of woman born could bring against him?”

But after exhausting all the inducements to immediate peace, the honourable gentleman had endeavoured to alarm the House by prophecies of the dangers and disasters to be expected from the prosecution of the war. On this point, as it was matter upon which much less conviction could be attained by argument, Mr. Canning said he should not detain the House long. He would only observe, in passing, that when among those dangers the honourable gentleman enumerated so confidently the desertion of our allies, and when he inferred the almost certainty of this desertion from a review of the past conduct of these powers, whom he had stigmatized with every opprobrious epithet that his imagination could suggest to him, he

could not help being surprized, that the honourable gentleman should not have reflected, that such a proceeding suited very ill with the recommendation which he had so often inculcated, in the course of his speech, to take no retrospect, and to abstain from invective. He wondered that it did not occur to him, that if there was much danger of irritating the enemy by intemperate language in that House, it was not wholly immaterial to consider whether similar language might not disgust our allies. Perhaps the honourable gentleman, thinking their dereliction of us so sure, one time or other, saw no harm in quickening it; and would have us get rid of them as soon as we could. But this policy seemed to him to be a little questionable. If a general commanding an army composed of many different nations, were to be told, that at a certain period, a month hence, perhaps, the several contingents of the different powers would be recalled; if he were told this when in presence of the enemy; and if his informer were to add, that he advised him, therefore, instantly to disband his forces himself, and to make what terms he could for his own safety: the advice, it seemed to him, was not such as the general would most prudently follow; he would rather conclude that no time, therefore, was to be lost, no exertion spared, to make the utmost advantage of the combination of his whole force while it yet continued unbroken.

But with respect to the probability of such an event as the honourable gentleman foretold, and with respect to the dreadful disgraces and calamities which were to follow it, he would not trespass upon the patience of the House (especially considering who were to follow him in the debate) by opposing his calculations and predictions to those of the honourable gentleman. It was sufficient for the vote of that night, if government should be allowed to have acted right under the actual circumstances of the case. It would be indeed hazardous, to foretell the successes of the campaign. But it was some comfort to reflect, that the campaign which was just closed, though at its close not in every respect so triumphant as might have been wished, and for a time expected, was yet, upon the whole, one of the most brilliant that history records; so much had been done in that campaign, that if any body at its outset had ventured to anticipate its progress and conclusion, such, as they have in fact proved to be, he would have been considered as sanguine almost to madness. He for his part did not at present see in the state either of France, or of the powers at war with her, any thing to warrant the tone of despondency, which the honourable gentleman assumed; and to say the truth, when he recollected the many unfulfilled predictions of evil, which had come from the bench on which

the honourable gentleman sat, he was not disposed to be much cast down by it. The last time that the tripod of prophecy had been brought into that House, he remembered (it was in the spring of 1797,) the House were solemnly warned that there was not "three weeks regular government" remaining to the country. That period was long past; and, God be thanked, the evils of anarchy had not yet fallen upon them. He doubted not that it was owing to our own exertions that we were yet safe; and if we were true to ourselves, we had yet abundant means to provide for the continuance of our safety.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, February 12.

Lord HOLLAND rose, and made his promised motion for an inquiry into the causes of the failure of the late Expedition to Holland, in nearly the following words:

"My Lords, there is a subject which of all others I should wish to avoid, as the one on which I could probably speak with the least propriety, and you would certainly listen with the least interest—that is, myself. I shall not therefore detain you with any explanations of my motives in coming forward, or of the feelings which the situation in which I have placed myself by so doing, naturally suggests; but thus much allow me to say certainly with truth, I trust without the appearance of vanity of affected disparagement of myself: It was my wish that this subject might be brought forward by some person more equal to the task, more likely to enforce it by authority, consideration, and ability, than myself: I waited in anxious hope and expectation that some noble Lord would undertake it. When, however, I despaired of this, I felt it my duty, reluctant as I was, to give the House an opportunity of examining into the causes of the late failure of our arms in Holland: I say, my Lords, reluctant, for I do fear that, from so often differing with the prevailing opinions in this House, I am compelled much too often to trespass on your indulgence, and would willingly avoid, could I consistently with my duty, the appearance, as well as the reality of giving you the least unnecessary trouble. It is not pleasant in itself to differ widely from those one is in the habit of addressing: but that circumstance alone, however I lament it, has never, and I trust never will, deter me from doing what I conceive to be my duty, from uttering what I feel to be my conscientious

opinion. The conduct which subjects me to that inconvenience I never shall regret, and I feel no disposition to apologize for or excuse—but there is one dread, one apprehension, which I own does press upon my mind; that is, the apprehension of fatiguing your patience, the dread of abusing your indulgence, and occupying more of your time than becomes me, who has so little right to engage much of your attention. I should then have rejoiced, had the task I have imposed upon myself fallen to the lot of another; for I am fully aware of all the difficulties I have to encounter; I know all the discouraging circumstances under which I labour; I can say (would to God the projectors of this calamitous expedition could say as much), I have reflected upon and foreseen all the obstacles I can meet with; I can encounter no difficulty which I do not expect; I know the nature of the contest I engage in; I know the weather and climate of this House; I fear I know too well the disposition of those whom it is my object to conciliate.

Omnia precepi atque animo mecum ante peregi.

Till within these very few days, I did indeed imagine, that the failure in itself was so undeniable, that the sensation it had produced was so strong, that though we might differ as to the propriety of an inquiry, the fact of failure was one which would not, which could not, be disputed. I thought that the bare circumstance of 45,000 English and Russian troops, after having landed in Holland, after having gained, as we were told, four victories, and sustained a fifth action, in which the result was doubtful, being compelled to purchase their escape from an inferior force, by giving up 8,000 prisoners; I thought, I say, that this bare circumstance, if with me your Lordships did not think it rendered inquiry indispensably necessary, would have been sufficient, at least, to excite your indignation, and to extort even from the projectors themselves the confession that they had miserably and disgracefully failed. But I find that it is to be contended, that the result of the expedition has been glorious, that it has been profitable, that it has been satisfactory! Some, indeed, who seem to be very nice in words, do not think it disgraceful; no, it is only discreditable.—Discreditable! well, be it so. Discredit or disgrace, whichever you will, I only ask, what the country, what every plain man, what Europe, must and does think of an army of forty-five thousand men buying permission to evacuate a country they came to conquer, and from an inferior force? I ask, if this is glorious? I ask, if this is honourable? Is this a failure, or is it not? Can any man doubt whether disgrace has been incurred? Can any man doubt that

our arms have been foiled, that our plans have been disconcerted, that our object has been defeated? But if it be not so, what mean the rejoicings, the triumphant and insulting language of the enemy upon it. The Batavian President says to his Assembly: "The friends of the Stadtholder are obliged to hide themselves. Since the news, the public funds have risen, the price of provisions is fallen." Why then, my Lords, on the termination of this expedition, which some affect to call glorious, our enemies considered it as a triumph, the friends of this country, and I appeal to the recollection and feelings of your Lordships, heard it mortification and alarm. I know, indeed, as must be the case in such matters, that the sensation has diminished in the interval that has elapsed; but I wish you to recall the feelings, the first and natural impressions which this event made upon the mind of every individual in the country. I ask, whether at that moment the universal sentiment was not that of disappointment and indignation? whether the universal cry was not for inquiry? I wish that I could recall every man that hears me (and then I should not despair of my motion) into that frame of mind in which he was when he first learnt, that that army, so large in its force, so high, so sanguine in its hopes at the hour of embarkment for Holland, was retreating, after being baffled by an inferior force, in virtue of an armistice obtained from the moderation, and dependent on the good faith of General Brune: and here allow me to express my surprise at the conduct of the noble Secretary of State, who, with this instance fresh in the recollection of every man, could affirm, without qualification, that throughout the war, the French have never kept an armistice with good faith. Did they not preserve this? and was it not lucky for us that they did so? Did not General Brune, though great immediate advantages would have resulted to him from the breach of them, scrupulously and religiously observe his engagements? That excellent and liberal officer, Sir James Pulteney, bears ample testimony to the honour, and even zeal, with which the French General complied with the terms of his engagements; and yet this is the very General whom the noble Secretary of State so decently and liberally selects as one of the peculiar objects of his virulent invectives. But to return—I understand that it has been stated, that the loss of the British in this expedition was only 800. I am most sincerely happy to hear it, and should be still more happy if I had the information on evidence that could not be disputed. This alone, if it be true, would be a good reason for inquiry: even the Gazettes, and yet more public reports, have led people to a very different belief on this subject. It is fit that they

should learn this consolatory fact in some more authentic manner; the public are entitled to it. Anxious at all times for the fate of their fellow countrymen, and depressed with the general report of the loss of men in Holland, it is surely cruel to leave their satisfaction to the credit which the bare and unsupported assertion of a Minister is entitled to. But it is said, the expedition succeeded as a diversion of the enemy's forces, and in the capture of the Dutch fleet. It must be observed, however, that whatever policy, whatever advantage there may be in creating a diversion of the enemy's forces, this forms no justification of a particular expedition, and of a specific attempt. It is quite a different thing to say, that it is good to distract the enemy's attention, and to say, that you have done it in the best and most effectual manner. It is not enough that the diversion was of importance, unless it can be shewn that it produced the utmost effect that could be desired with the least inconvenience to ourselves. This may be an argument generally in favour of keeping up an imposing force, and pursuing offensive operations. It proves nothing at all either as to the wisdom of a particular design, or the ability of its conduct. Doubtless the Dutch expedition occasioned some diversion of the enemy's troops, but not so much as might have been produced had the attempt been made in some other quarter: for it is a fact pretty well known, that our army was opposed, in a great measure, by Batavian forces, who, in all probability, would not have been employed in any other operations. When we hear so much said of the importance of this diversion, it is worth while to remark, that at this period the French were most successful in other quarters. At the very moment when General Brune agreed to the capitulation at Helder, the French army in Switzerland had begun to retrieve its disaster. This is a circumstance peculiarly worthy of consideration, and it may serve to damp our hopes in the effects of any pressure that may be made upon France. The advantages of this attempt, as a diversion, however, have nothing to do with the merits of the design; they form no argument whatever against inquiry. The capture of the Dutch fleet too, we are told, is of itself a sufficient justification of the Expedition, and a sufficient reward for our exertions. Whatever be the value of this capture, it is not to be admitted as a set-off for the expence and the bloodshed which the enterprise has occasioned. If the expedition was undertaken to rescue Holland from the dominion of France, and to restore the Stadtholder to his authority, how can the Dutch fleet be a compensation for the absolute failure of these objects? But look a little at dates; examine the fact. The Dutch fleet was in our possession before our army was

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put in motion to carry into effect the other objects which Ministers originally professed to have principally in view. The Dutch fleet, therefore, was not the cause of prosecuting the attempt; it can form no justification for our farther attempt in that quarter. It cannot prove that we pursued our object in the quarter, and in the manner best calculated to ensure success: be its value what it may, it cannot detract either from the faults or disgrace which attended our subsequent operations.

“We are told that the people of Holland were favourable to our cause: be it so; what is the inference? If with the sentiments of the Dutch people in our favour, an army of 45,000 men was obliged to purchase its escape, what stronger argument can be conceived for inquiry? Really it is difficult to account for this phenomenon—we land a superior force in the best point of attack; the army conduct themselves bravely; the commanders skilfully; the contrivers wisely:—the people are all for us; we have four victories, one drawn battle, and no defeat; and yet at the end of all this, after advancing a few leagues, we are obliged to purchase permission of an inferior army to retreat. Why this is really so strange, that out of mere curiosity you must inquire into the causes of an event so contrary to all human experience, to all probability, and to all belief. Let us then examine the wisdom of the design, and the execution. Before any statesman, or, indeed, any man of sense, engages in any undertaking, he must consider how far the object is desirable, what necessary inconveniences he must submit to in order to undertake the enterprize, how likely he is to succeed in it, and what will be the consequences of failure. To rescue Holland from French dominion, to restore the Dutch to their antient alliance with this country, to reinstate the Stadtholder, certainly are objects which, provided they are practicable and just, are desirable to the interest of Great Britain—I say, provided they are just; for even the claims of the Stadtholder upon this country, strong as they are, would not justify the attempt in opposition to the sense of the people of Holland. And at the same time that I say this object is desirable for Great Britain, I beg leave to be understood as not confounding the success of our arms in Holland with the complete attainment of that object; it is desirable for us that a Government, strong and able to maintain itself and our ally, should be in possession of Holland; that it is desirable that the Prince of Orange should be kept at Amsterdam, or the Hague, under the protection of our army, or of an army in our pay, is a very different question. I am glad I speak before so many military men, that, if I am wrong, they will set me right; but with great

submission, I apprehend, that if we had marched to Amsterdam, that if we had got to Rotterdam, that yet, with Breda, with Bergen-op-Zoom, with Bois le Duc, with Maestriche, with, in short, all the barrier in the hands of the enemy, Holland would have been an insecure and precarious possession, maintainable only by a large and expensive army, quartered in unwholesome stations, and employed upon fatiguing, as well as discouraging service: and certainly it could not be expected, that after landing, at the distant point of the Helder, so late in the season, that, even had the whole country risen in our favour, we could get possession of the fortified towns in this campaign, so that even success would have involved us in the expence and risk of keeping a large army in that unwholesome station throughout the Autumn and Winter. I come now to the necessary and unavoidable inconveniences, which, though I will allow that they are not sufficient to deter one from an undertaking, must always be taken into the calculation as of no inconsiderable weight in the balance of a doubtful project. Among these the necessary expences should have been considered, and the great distress of the season—yes, I say the waste of provision at a time a scarcity was so justly apprehended—I say the employment of transports which retarded the supply of coals to the metropolis, an article so necessary to the comfort of its inhabitants, that any circumstance which tended to increase its price, at a moment when all the other necessaries of life were so dear, was a crying evil—I say, these circumstances did form great objections to the undertaking; to counterbalance which, the general policy of the enterprise, and the probability of success, ought to have been great, clear, and indisputable. Did not the situation of Ireland also form an objection? Was not the defenceless state in which these exertions left that country, a hazardous experiment? I ask, if it was not felt so? I ask, whether the return of the fleet to Brest created no alarm? Or had that *beautiful* scheme of a Union so completely succeeded in calming the minds and conciliating the affections of the Irish, that the Ministers of this country felt no apprehension at all on that head. But there was another great inconvenience—I mean the breaking down the Militia system, the overturning the fabric it required so much time and trouble to rear. I have a right to assume this as a great inconvenience to the Militia—It was stated so by those most immediately concerned in that corps repeatedly and forcibly in this House; and the only officer in the Militia who assigned any reason for supporting the bill (Lord Hardwicke), very candidly admitted, that it was an inconvenience and hardship, and that it was felt so by the Militia, though he thought it was one which the necessity of the

case called for. One noble Lord, indeed, high in office, complimented his colleagues on their address in passing these bills—and what was this address? It was no other than carrying them through Parliament at a late period of the session, in thin Houses, and when the subject could not be discussed in the manner that the importance demanded. Leaving therefore to your Lordships to judge of the decorum of this parliamentary and constitutional compliment, I have a right to infer, that it was an act in itself unpopular and inconvenient, since it required the address to get it pass, which the noble Lord thought so proper a topic of eulogium in a House of Parliament: and seeing in this light, I repeat, that it was one, and not the least, of the many inconveniences which should have been weighed as objections to an undertaking of this magnitude. But another circumstance to be examined is, whether, in case of failure, you do not incur disadvantages greater than the advantages you reap from success. Now, examine it in that way, what have been the consequences of our failure? Has not the unfortunate termination of our attempt to deliver the Dutch and to restore the Stadtholder, thrown Holland more firmly than ever into the power of France? It has diminished the confidence of our partisans in our protection. Besides, if the allies had been as successful in another campaign as they were in the last, might not Holland have been obtained by negotiation? For this object, at least, the King of Prussia would have lent us his influence. All hopes of such a compromise seem now to have vanished. We do not find that the French are ready on all occasions to give up their allies. The negotiation at Lisle broke off, because the French would not allow us to indemnify ourselves by retaining the Cape of Good Hope, Ceylon, &c.; and I am convinced this example operated as much to render the French popular in Holland as it must have done to excite suspicion of our conduct. What then were our prospects of success? At one time we seem to have expected the co-operation of Prussia, which would, no doubt, very materially have increased the probability of success; but early in June 1799, it is actually and certainly very whimsically stated, that his Prussian Majesty was determined to persevere in his neutrality—Most heinous and wicked determination, and one that we were wise and justified in holding up in our public treaties to the astonishment and execration of Europe!—Really, my Lords, this curious exhibition of our pacific dispositions in one point of view, and our great policy in another, does shew the candour of reasoning, and the wisdom of conduct adopted by Ministers, in a very striking light. We talk of evidence of facts during war, of the pacific dispositions of France; and we observe, as a proof of their

hostile temper, that all nations have been at war with them, and then, as it were, in the same breath, we avow that we have been employed in stirring up neutral countries against them; and we expose the wickedness of the Prussian Cabinet to public view, which would not be induced by any temptation to plunge its subjects into war. If we had succeeded, as we failed, in this negotiation, would it have furnished another proof to the Secretary of State of the mischievous and turbulent politics of the Republic?—So much for our candour. As to our wisdom, it seems our great love of justice in exposing the Court of Prussia for its wicked neutrality, ran away with every mean idea of policy and interest; and in the outset of our hostile undertakings, we generously informed our enemy, that she need be under no apprehensions from Prussia—"You may possibly think, we say, that Prussia will assist us; be under no apprehensions on that head; he remains firm to his engagements; all your suspicions of him, if you have any, are ill grounded; and before we endeavour to conquer you, we will bear ample testimony to the reliance you may place in his neutrality." Was this politic? and is this the language of Statesmen? No man can possibly think so; and yet such was, in fact, the conduct and language of our Ministers. Surely too, it was worth while to consider the difficulty of the country for military operations. That it was so, nobody could be ignorant. I am well assured that the Duke of Brunswick, who over-ran Holland in 1787, said, that with 10,000 men, and being in possession of the barrier towns, he could defend it against all Europe. Such were the difficulties which it was easy to foresee, and on which it was necessary to calculate.

"What then are the grounds upon which the attempt was recommended, and by which it is now to be justified? What reason had Ministers to suppose that the Dutch were well disposed to our cause? Did they evince any such disposition? But it may be said, that they had no opportunity. Take this either way—If they had an opportunity of joining our cause, it is evident by their backwardness that they were not inclined to support it. If they had no opportunity, how did it come to pass, that with an army of 45,000 men we never could hold out that hope of protection which could induce men to flock to our standard? If the place of landing was ill calculated to display our strength, and to entice partisans, is not this a glaring proof of the misconduct of those who contrived the plan of the expedition? From the first action which took place at the Helder, we had reason to despair of any co-operation from the Dutch soldiers. Then the action was sustained entirely by Batavian troops. On the action of the 2d of September, indeed, these

had been joined by French troops, but they displayed the same obstinate resistance. We ought, from that moment, to have despaired of any advantage from the prosecution of the attempt in this quarter. But if the disposition of the inhabitants was really favourable, we ought to have employed such means as were calculated to conciliate their confidence, and obtain their co-operation. Was this the manner in which we acted? These are questions not to be answered by mere assertion. They demand serious inquiry, and can be satisfied by no other means. I do not mean to disparage the military forces of our allies; but this I say, that the employment of Russian troops was not calculated to conciliate the people of Holland. From the habits of that army, it is not too much to assert, that they are not likely to diminish the ordinary horrors of war in the country that is the theatre of it. Perhaps, indeed, it was necessary to employ the aid of the Russians, if the attempt was to take place at all: but it should no less have been considered, that if they were the only allies we could employ, that it was a discouraging circumstance that we must depend upon troops so little calculated to conciliate the affections of the people, upon which our hopes of success were chiefly to be grounded. But the Dutch are averse to the yoke of France—I believe they are with reason; but it does not follow that they prefer the dominion of England, and the authority of the Stadtholder. I do believe, and I think I have already said so in this House, that, of the two, the Dutch would rather be as they were in 1792, than as they are now: but I suspect that the difference of their situation is not, in their minds, so great as to warrant the risk of a war, and, perhaps, of above one campaign in their country. I do not speak this to their disparagement: I think they are right: and I will freely own, that as far as I can judge, such would be my sentiments if I was an inhabitant of that country. I say this, my Lords, for it really is necessary to examine these subjects with impartiality. The Dutch have many and crying grievances against the French; and he must be a bad Dutchman who does not feel that they have; but nevertheless, all that has been said about the French tyranny in Holland is not true. We call them plunderers, murderers, atheists, and all the hard names we can invent; but have they exercised any extraordinary severities in Holland? Have there been any great political persecution? Has there been any religious persecution whatsoever? And even their plunder, though very unjustifiable levies have been made, and contributions which the French had no right to exact; yet even in that article the Dutch have less to complain than most nations dependent on one more powerful than themselves. In

point of discipline, from their very first invasion to this moment, their armies have been exemplary. But I would ask, have the Dutch, on whom the conduct of the French is supposed to have so much effect in alienating their minds, have they no grievances against us? or, at least, have they never thought that they had? Is it not certain that they have been dissatisfied with our conduct heretofore? and was it not a natural conclusion that they might be suspicious of it now? For many years they have been estranged from our interest and connection. I ask not which party has been to blame. The fact is unquestionable. The proceedings in 1787 proved, that a great party was hostile to the influence of this country, and favourable to that of France. I doubt extremely whether, in the face of that general disposition, the part taken by this country and Prussia in the restoration of the Stadtholder was just, however desirable it might have been to oppose the credit of the French in Holland. I do not wish now to say any thing on that transaction. It has received much praise, and, perhaps, was necessary. It is not, I confess, one of those transactions which excites my admiration. But it will be allowed, that the interference might have been useful on the principle of British policy, and yet have rendered the people of Holland more adverse to our party. The Dutch might, and I believe did, feel it a galling yoke, to see the Stadtholder maintained by Prussian armies and British interference. They were plunged by us into a war, in which they had no interest. They may be averse to the dominion of France; but would they prefer a Stadtholder, supported by Russian armies, and under the guidance of British Counsels? Perhaps even it may be more for the interest of Dutchmen to cultivate French than British connection; but whether it is or not, it is certainly possible that they may think so. Many great Statesmen in Holland, in all periods, have thought so; and as far as we can collect from late experience, it has, in modern times, been the prevalent notion in that country. Why, then, I maintain, that we ought, in this last attempt, to have been peculiarly careful, to say nothing, and to do nothing, that could excite the suspicions of the people in Holland: but were we so, or were we not? In a public paper of Lord Duncan's, the Prince of Orange is called *legitimate Sovereign*, an expression sufficient to excite alarm and suspicion throughout the country of Holland. My Lords, I mention not this with any intention of imputing blame to the gallant Admiral; God forbid! but I do impute blame to those who employed him, for not instructing him carefully in the language that it was necessary to hold; and if they had omitted this, for not explicitly and distinctly

explaining that this error, in the description of the Stadtholderate, was merely accidental ; for I do say, that it gave a plausible pretence on which to raise alarms in Holland that more was intended than the mere restoration of the office of Stadtholder—the more so, as if they ever do us the honour of attending to what is reported to be said in these walls, they would have seen the noble Secretary of State, in the debates of the Union with Ireland, citing their antient Constitution as an instance of weakness and imbecility ; and when reminded of it afterwards, more openly than prudently, declaring, that he hoped, when restored, means would be found of rendering it a stronger and more vigorous Government. So much for our Minister's talents of conciliation. I come now to the military operations—of these I certainly speak with the greatest diffidence and distrust ; one circumstance, indeed, it is pleasant for me to reflect upon, that, defective as the plan of military operations seems to my poor judgment to have been, none of the fault, none of the blame, seems to me to attach itself to the illustrious Commander, the gallant Officers who served under him, or the brave army which he commanded. I say this is to me a great satisfaction ; for it would have added greatly to the pain of the task I have undertaken, if there had appeared to me (as there does not) the slightest ground of imputation on the conduct of one, to whose exalted situation, and to whose illustrious family we all owe so much duty and respect. But, nevertheless, I wish it to be clearly understood, that much as I do respect the character of the Royal Commander in Chief, if I thought the least blame attached to his conduct, though the duty would be more painful, I should feel it equally my duty to investigate his conduct as that of another man ; I should conceive it to be equally incumbent on this House to censure misconduct in one of his exalted rank as in any other Commander. I am happy to think, and I congratulate this House, that the principle, to the best of my belief, does not in this instance apply ; but I state the principle as constitutional and undeniable, because if this principle be not felt in Parliament, another far more cruel to persons of that elevated station must be adopted—that of never employing them in the service of their country. But, in truth, I hold Ministers responsible for the whole ; for theirs, I presume, was the plan and the contrivance ; and as they have not shewn any discontent with those they employed, I have a right to assume, that they think justice has been done to their plan. Indeed, if the distinguished courage and gallantry of our troops had been exerted on a project that in itself was not rash and impracticable, it must have produced other results ; for on the bravery of our

troops, there is in this country, and happy I am to say it, but one opinion—we have, indeed, a right to be proud on that score; all accounts agree in this particular. But, my Lords, evident as was the courage of our troops, glorious as was the conduct of our soldiers, and gratified as every Englishman must be at the consciousness of this circumstance, there is one person who has dared, in the most public manner, in the face of all Europe, to stigmatise the behaviour of the British army, commander, officers, and men, with the most injurious accusations. Yes, in the Petersburg Gazette, published under the direction and the authority of the Government there (indeed in that regular Government there are few or no publications but of that description), General D'Essen, the Russian Commander's letter, expressly states, that in the action of the eighth we failed to attack at the time agreed upon; that by this their countrymen were sacrificed; that the Russian army was in want of ammunition, in want of provisions, in want of every necessary article with which we were bound to furnish them: and throughout the letter he throws out insinuations the most injurious to our national honour and our military character. My Lords, if there is no other reason for inquiry, will you not vindicate the honour of your army from these foul and false aspersions? Will you not wipe away the stain which, in this public manner, is attempted to be affixed to your character? Recollect, that a commanding Officer in our allies army has published to Europe, that all the disgrace of the failure is owing to our want of courage and enterprize. Whatever our own conviction on the subject may be, unless you this day inquire into the causes of the failure, that accusation will remain uncontradicted and unquestioned in the face of Europe. Oh, but it has been said by some, we must not enter into this delicate question; we must not engage in a controversy with the Emperor of Russia's Commanders, for fear of disobliging that Court, and irritating the most useful of our allies—they are afraid, forsooth, that the magnanimity of the Emperor Paul will revolt at the idea of an independent nation vindicating its character from aspersions as false as they are disgraceful. So that we must tamely sit down and see our army disgraced, accused, and vilified, in the face of all Europe, and not say one word in its defence for fear of offending our ally. Is this the meaning of our alliance with Russia? and is it upon these terms that Great Britain deals with an ally whom she subsidizes to fight her battles? Though I do not approve of the objects to which it is now directed, I will not dispute that, generally speaking, the alliance with Russia is advantageous to this country; but I trust that I do not over-rate the importance of our

country when I say, that in alliances with her the advantages are at least mutual; that it is not a favour she receives, but that she has every right to treat upon equal terms with the proudest Emperor on the Continent. Shall we then, from the fear of possibly offending an ally, tamely acquiesce in outrageous libels upon the military character of the country? Is the honour of our soldiers to be thus bartered and compromised for any advantage? Are our alliances to be purchased by a sacrifice of what is dearest to a country—the courage, the honour, the reputation of its army? Are these great objects to be meanly yielded up to satisfy the whims of any Court? Is it tolerable that a subject of our ally should accuse our army of cowardice and misconduct, and we shall not be permitted to inquire and ascertain to whom censure may belong? Are we thus, by a pusillanimous acquiescence in unjust reproaches, to deprive our army of that character which raises it most highly in its own esteem, and renders it most formidable to the enemy? The Russian Government, I am sorry to observe, has got too much influence in this. If there be any law in this country that prevents the press from commenting with freedom and truth on the conduct and politics of the Russian Government, I am sorry for it. Such a law ought not to exist. But if it is not permitted to animadvert on the politics of Russia, shall a Russian subject be allowed to vent the most atrocious libels in the most public manner, and with all the sanction of authority, against the whole British army? The reasons for the inquiry I propose come home to the honest feelings of every Englishman. You owe it to the troops, who have been defamed—to the country, whose character is at stake—to your own honour, as its faithful guardians—to inquire into calumnies of such fatal tendency, and to show who are justly obnoxious to censure.

“But to return to the military operations:—On the 27th of August the landing at the Helder was effected, after a severe action. Another engagement took place on the 2d of September, after the Dutch troops, who alone had been engaged on the first day, had been joined by French reinforcements. Now I ask, why Sir Ralph Abercromby did not advance after the advantages he had gained? That most excellent officer (of whom I speak not only without censure, but with that respect which his character and conduct on all occasions inspire), must by that time have ascertained the dispositions of the people. The place where the landing was effected, I speak, I am sure, with very little knowledge of military affairs, but I speak in presence of many persons that have more; the place, I say, in which the troops landed was not calculated for the operations of a large army—crowded in that small track of

land, a large force, if it had arrived, could not at once be brought into action. Reinforcements were naturally arriving every day from France. I ask, therefore, to what the delay of General Abercromby is to be attributed? Was it for want of supplies? Was it not in consequence of orders? Was it that he despaired of any advantage from prosecuting the attempt? I deliver no opinion on this subject, but I ask you to inquire. Perhaps inquiry would clear it up: perhaps inquiry would shew that the delay was necessary, was right, was well judged. But again, if it was so, it must have been foreseen; and then I ask, why attempt the expedition at so late a season of the year? To this, and to all other reasonings, it may be answered, all was well arranged, all was well prepared, all was well conducted; but unforeseen and improbable events, hurricanes, bad seasons, &c. &c. intervened; and to this, and this only, failure is to be ascribed. To which I reply, inquire—Why should you not? I maintain, your duty and public feeling call upon you to inquire. If Ministers maintain that unavoidable accidents occasioned the failure, and at the same time resist inquiry, I contend, that their conduct is at variance with their assertions. I shall even believe, that in resisting inquiry, they wish to screen themselves, and not the elements, from censure. If the winds and weather were alone to blame, they would feel little compunction in exposing their conduct to the House and to the Public. In that case we might hear much of the calamity, much of the misfortune; but there would be no disposition to mystery, no inclination to concealment—

Sorsque querenda

Non celanda foret—

But if they resist inquiry, I must and shall believe that it is because they know their conduct cannot bear investigation; and I am convinced, that no impartial man will acquit them of the principal share of the disgrace with which the expedition was attended.

“I have enumerated some of the advantages that must result from inquiry. You will re-establish the character of your army. We know that it is natural to impute the blame of unsuccessful military operations to the commander, or army. In this country such blame may not be imputed; but in Europe the charge will be made, and it stands supported by the statements of General D’Essen, in the *Petersburgh Gazette*. It is necessary to demonstrate the truth by a fair investigation. By no other course can you satisfy the demands of your national honour and your military reputation.

“At a moment too when it is decided that the war should be continued to a period which we cannot fix in idea; when new expe-

ditions are, it is rumoured, about to be undertaken; it becomes you to ascertain how they are likely to be conducted, by inquiring what has been the ability and the wisdom displayed in other instances by those who plan and conduct them. Is it not proper to inquire whether Ministers may not again be encouraging those delusions by which they have already been misled? They rely upon the favourable disposition of the French people to justify their attempts for the restoration of the House of Bourbon. The proportion of the disaffected in France seems, however, to be less than it was in Holland. If the expedition to the Helder failed by the rashness, the negligence, and incapacity of Ministers, will you encourage them by your acquiescence in past misconduct and former disgrace, to embark in schemes so much more doubtful in their policy, and likely to be so much more perilous in their consequences. I move therefore, "That the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to inquire into the causes of the failure of the late Expedition to Holland."

The Earl of MOIRA coincided with the noble Lord in his sentiments respecting the illustrious personage who conducted the expedition. That he did not appear in his seat on the present occasion, he was convinced proceeded from delicacy, lest his presence might repress the full disclosure of opinion upon a question in which he felt so deeply interested. Were that illustrious personage to yield to the impulse of his own mind, he was satisfied he would solicit inquiry; but the great objection to gratify such a wish was, that it necessarily connected itself with the public good; and therefore he preferred to submit to ill-grounded calumny, rather than risk the interest of the country by a personal vindication. But, whatever sentiments individuals might entertain, the candour of the country, he was sure, would never judge of merit by the event; and when the conduct of that illustrious personage was duly weighed, he could not but have a strong influence upon the public opinion. As to the general question, he put it to the candour of the noble Lord not to press it against men who stood upon a ground where it was impossible they could make a defence. The very circumstances laid down by the noble Lord himself shewed that they were placed in such a situation. The difficulty of operations in Holland was admitted, and that such an enterprise could not succeed without the co-operations of its inhabitants: that Ministers were aware of this, and were confident of such co operation, was therefore natural to presume; but this very circumstance was a sufficient argument against inquiry. The dilemma then proposed by the noble Lord, whether or not the people had an opportunity to rise, he was desirous should not be

entertained. To determine that point, to justify the confidence of co-operation, would inevitably lead to the most dangerous disclosures, to the public designation of our friends in that country, their number and situation, and of the whole correspondence on which the confidence of co-operation was founded, and the practicability of the object presumed; a procedure that might not only prove injurious at the present, but interfere with all future operations of a similar kind. The noble Lord had inferred, from the fact of the people of Holland not rising, that no disposition to do so really existed; but to this conclusion he could not accede. Many circumstances might occur to render it imprudent to reveal their real sentiments by active co-operation. He could conceive many, and no doubt many actually existed. Were then Ministers' to state them even hypothetically, were the greatest possible caution used in the inquiry, might they not afford a clue to the whole detail of our correspondence, to the discovery of our friends, and of all the particulars from which openness was expected? In candour, therefore, to the Ministers, to the illustrious personage alluded to, and to all the parties concerned, and with a view to the injury that might result from disclosure, in case a similar attempt should be made again, an event not impossible, from the determination to continue the war, he must request that the noble Lord would not press his motion. These were the reasons which induced him to rise thus early, to request their Lordships not to go into it. If the noble Lord should, however, persist, he declared his intention to move the previous question; but it would give him much more satisfaction, should he consent to withdraw his motion.

Earl SPENCER objected to the motion of the noble Lord (Holland), on the grounds that it was not possible to enter on the inquiry, from the difficulties which must necessarily arise to Ministers in matters where they were bound to be secret. Much as he was satisfied with the observations of the noble Earl, who had just sat down, he could not refrain from adding a few words in answer to the noble Lord, who expressed his surprize that this motion had not been made by some noble Lord at an earlier period. He, on his part, had to express his surprize that it was made at all, and was at a loss even now to know, after what was said, on what grounds it could be made. He confessed it was one of those difficult things that could be thrown in the way of Ministers? for on their silence suspicion was attempted to be thrown, and their disclosure of the circumstances must lead to serious consequences. He would assert, as he was bound to do, that from every circumstance attending that expedition, if fully and fairly investigated, it would appear to have

been taken up on justifiable grounds. The noble Lord had made, in the course of his speech, many omissions, and dwelt upon such parts of the expedition as tended to set it in the most unfavourable point of view. He presses for an inquiry upon the grounds of the facts which he has stated, in order to ascertain whether those facts are false or true. This opinion he (Lord Spencer) was not ready to adopt from the consequence that must ensue: he did not adopt them on any failure of our expeditions: he did not think their Lordships should adopt them even in a total failure of the object altogether: for he did not think it safe or wise to make such a failure an object of inquiry. The noble Lord (Holland) acknowledged that the expedition had objects sufficiently important to induce this country to undertake it. He admitted, that to rescue Holland, and to cause a diversion in the forces of the enemy, were legitimate objects. He admitted that the capture of the Dutch fleet was an advantage gained for the country. On those admissions, the expedition did not fail; of those three objects, considerably important, two out of the three have succeeded most completely. The House, in confirmation of what he stated, will call to mind the month when the expedition took place, and to what good effect it operated in favour of the allies. The signal defeats which the enemy experienced, was one of the good effects occasioned by this expedition, as it was fair to infer, that the forces called into action in Holland, as withdrawn from the French in Italy and Switzerland, tended to weaken their efforts and increase the force of the combined armies. The expedition deprived the enemy of part of their naval force; this could not be considered as a failure. His Lordship (Holland) said, that this was a matter not likely to conciliate the minds of the people of Holland to this country; but if that had not succeeded, and we had returned without a ship, his Lordship, he thought, would have had much more ample cause for complaint. Could his Lordship bring the country into such reflections as he made on the expedition, he might have some grounds for his motion. On the contrary, if it appears to your Lordships, that there was a prospect of undertaking this expedition with success, though it failed of the main object, and yet it gained others of considerable advantage; if on a view of all the circumstances and conduct of it, there does not appear sufficient reasons to justify the suspicions and doubts of the noble Lord who made the motion—your Lordships will not be disposed to enter on an inquiry likely to produce such serious consequences to the country; for, though it is the duty of Parliament to institute inquiries where there are just and legitimate grounds for

them, it is equally its duty to resist them upon occasions where neither prudence, wisdom, nor policy, can justify them.

Lord MULGRAVE said, that the subject before them was justly stated to be a question full of extreme difficulty. He would give his opinion as a man who was unconnected with any party, having had no communication with ministry on this business. His was the simple military opinion of a man, who involved no man's opinion by that which he would give. He was well aware of the great consideration this question involved; the character of a commander dear to the country, of officers of the most distinguished merit, and the credit and responsibility of Ministers. His Lordship stated the situation of the government of a country with respect to its plans and expeditions, and the character and often critical situation of the military employed on such occasions. Did any man doubt that the deliverance of Holland from the hands of the French would be a benefit to this country, and an injury to France? Holland was the natural and antient ally of England. Since the days of Elizabeth, it always was in alliance and friendship, with very little intermission, with Great Britain. The advantages of such an alliance were now no less beneficial than heretofore. It would open a communication with our allies. It would open the trade to Germany. These were great considerations. The attempt to gain these advantages compelled those troops into Holland that would have been sent to the Rhine, and thus we co-operated with our ally, the Emperor, in that quarter. That the plan of the expedition was good, whatever its result might be stated to be, he was well assured. There was at the time of its plan, in August, an enthusiastic attachment to this country; and had Sir Ralph Abercromby, when joined by General Don, and possessed of a force of 15,000 men, penetrated into Amsterdam, he would then have been in a situation in which the Duke of Brunswick said he would bid defiance to all Europe. He then would have had all the country before him, and the object would have been realised. What then does the motion come to? Whether the object was sufficient to induce this country to attempt it, though it did not gain all the advantages it proposed; the question then is, on the conduct of the winds and the discretion of the clouds, which are beyond the control of Ministers or men. On these grounds he would negative the motion, as it was a question of climate, wind and weather.

Lord KING delivered his maiden speech in support of the inquiry. He observed, that as Ministers had declared their determination to continue the war, it became the duty of the House to investigate their conduct in the last expedition, in order to ascertain

whether they ought to be entrusted with the farther prosecution of hostilities. If he referred to the test of experience and the evidence of facts, the favourite phrase of Administration, he had still stronger grounds for the necessity of going into an inquiry; for the incapacity of Ministers had been already manifested by the expeditions to Corfica, Toulon, Quiberon, and Ostend. With respect to the state of the weather and the unfavourable winds which had prevailed in opposing the progress of the expedition, his Lordship insisted, that that consideration could not be urged in defence of its failure, as Ministers had sufficient time to make every preparation. The object was clear and precise, and lay at the distance of only forty-eight hours sail; and was it not the duty of Administration to run as few risks as possible? If there appeared but a faint chance of failure from any inclemency of the weather, why was not the expedition undertaken in the months of June and July, when that chance would have been considerably lessened? The House could not forget the two inquiries which had been instituted during the American war, and at present the grounds for a similar proceeding were much strengthened, since Administration, being possessed of unlimited means both in a financial and military view, was of course more responsible for the use and application of those means. If the object of Government was to impose and establish a strong Government in Holland, he would say such an object was not legitimate, as it went to interfere in the wishes of the people of that country. His Lordship concluded a speech of considerable ingenuity by observing, that the proposed inquiry was absolutely necessary for the vindication of Ministers.

Lord DARNLEY said, that he must enter his protest against several opinions and expressions used by the noble Lords who supported the motion. Indeed they appeared to him to be erroneous in many of their statements, and contradictory in many of their arguments. They had urged inquiry, on the ground of ascertaining whether the planners of the expedition were to blame for what they called its failure. But he could, upon this point, appeal to experience and the evidence of facts against their reasoning. For they themselves had allowed the legitimacy of the objects of the expedition; the experience of former times had given every reason to hope for their attainment; and the evidence of the facts that had occurred had shewn that they were practicable, because some of them had been attained. Every preparation was made that could tend to secure success; a powerful force was employed; and though, perhaps, in some points, the army might have been better constituted, it appeared perfectly adequate for the intended object, reckoning, as

Ministers were entitled, he believed on good grounds, to do, on the co-operation of the people of Holland. The noble Lords had urged inquiry, on the ground of ascertaining whether the conductors of the expedition were to blame; but at the same time they had allowed that the conduct of the army and of the generals was such as to acquit them in the opinion of the country; and indeed so far as conduct goes, he could again appeal to experience and the evidence of facts, to prove, that no army ever behaved with greater courage and gallantry; that no generals had ever displayed greater military talents than the army sent to Holland, and the generals who commanded it. The noble Lords had alledged that the termination of the expedition brought disgrace upon the country, and the national character. The unfavourableness of the weather on the first sailing of Sir Ralph Abercromby, and the badness of the season after the landing was effected, had indeed prevented complete success in all the objects for which the expedition was undertaken; but this partial failure had brought no disgrace on the country, nor on the national character. He must also enter his protest against another idea entertained by the noble Lord: it had been said, that after the fleet was captured, we ought to have rested satisfied, and our troops to have returned home; and it was urged in opposition to this, that by the terms on which we got possession of the fleet, we pledged ourselves to attempt the rescue of Holland from the power of France; when this attempt failed, the fleet ought to have been restored. It was true, that we were bound by every tie of honour and of regard to national character to endeavour the emancipation of Holland after the fleet surrendered; but when, from unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances, this attempt failed, it was surely preposterous to say, that we had not done all that could be required of us in fulfilment of our engagements, or to assert upon this ground that the fleet ought to have been restored. Lord Darnly concluded by giving his decided disapprobation to the motion.

Lord HOLLAND in explanation said, that the noble Lords had been extremely eloquent in proving, that if the fleet had been brought away, without our having prosecuted the other objects of the expedition, it would have been disgraceful to this country. He had never said that it would not; but he had maintained, that the object of taking the fleet, or our success in that attempt, could not prove that it was wise, after that object had been attained, to pursue the more material one of rescuing Holland from the French, in the precise manner and quarter we did pursue it. If he asked why we originally attacked the Helder, it might possibly be a plausible answer to say it was near the Dutch fleet, and facilitated the capture

of it; but if he asked why, after the capture of the Dutch fleet, we persisted in our attempts, in a quarter in which we had little prospect of success, and where the sentiments of the people did not seem to encourage us, it was no answer at all to say, that it would have been disgraceful to have come away with the Dutch fleet, and given up all attempts upon Holland; for that was not the question—if the capture of the fleet obliged us to make greater exertions for the restoration of the Dutch than we otherwise should have thought prudent, it could not pledge us to pursue our object in a particular manner, or a particular quarter; nor could it prove that we pursued that object in the wisest or best method possible. It had been said, that the elements alone were to blame for the failure of the expedition. He urged an inquiry, in order to ascertain whether the elements were really the cause of this failure. It is said that the planners of the expedition are not to blame, and that the officers who conducted it are not to blame, but the failure has taken place; blame must be imputable somewhere, and he wished to know where it ought to rest. Lord Mulgrave asserted, that if Sir Ralph Abercromby could have advanced when he was joined by General Don, he might have reached Amsterdam with the 15,000 men who composed his army, and that then he would have been in the situation in which the great Duke of Brunswick was placed, when he said, that with 15,000 he could have defied the force of Europe. This, in the noble Lord's opinion, would have secured the ultimate and complete success of the expedition. Why then could not this General advance? This was a motive for inquiry; and, perhaps, upon inquiry it would be found that the cause of his not advancing was his want of military stores, of ammunition, or of waggons; perhaps it might be found to be express orders given him to the contrary, and consequently, that even upon the statement of the noble Lord, the planners of the expedition at home were responsible for its failure. And if Sir Ralph Abercromby might have secured the success of the expedition with 15,000 men, why were more sent? The inquiry would inform us what probability there was of success at that time, and how far the sending reinforcements to Sir Ralph Abercromby, and the delay occasioned by his waiting for these reinforcements, tended to increase that probability. Lord Holland then adverted to some arguments used by Lord Spencer respecting the advantages which had resulted from the expedition, as making a powerful diversion in favour of the allied armies. But even this, he said, was not effected, as it might have been done. We had the choice of the time and place for making the diversion, and the time

we had chosen was when the campaign was already far advanced, and the place such as only called into action these troops of the enemy which were most at their disposal, and which otherwise would not have been employed at all. Lord Spencer had said, that as for himself, personally, he would delight in inquiry; and he had some reason for saying so; for it must be allowed, that the naval part of the expedition had been much better managed than the military. It was allowed that the Duke of York was not averse to inquiry; every body was anxious for it. Why then not grant it? and where would be the inconvenience which would result from it? The only argument which appeared to him of any force against the inquiry was the danger of disclosure. But this danger might be avoided, as it had been in this House, and more frequently in another on former occasions, by leaving the names blank; and even if it was insisted upon, by preventing any questions being put, or documents produced which might tend to create this danger. Lord Holland concluded with drawing a contrast between the manner in which we had been received by the Dutch in our first invasion of that country, and that in which the French had been received in their second attack upon Holland, when they overran the whole country, and with deducing from this contrast the inference that we had little grounds to applaud the information, or the judgement of Ministers, in undertaking an expedition which depended for its success on the co-operation of the people, when it had appeared that they were totally indisposed to our attempt.

Lord MULGRAVE rose to correct a misrepresentation which Lord Holland had made, of what he had said respecting Sir Ralph Abercromby marching to Amsterdam. He did not, as the noble Lord had asserted, ever insinuate any thing against the conduct of Sir Ralph Abercromby in not marching to Amsterdam. All that he had said was, that if Sir Ralph Abercromby had not been kept waiting off the coast of Holland till the French troops collected, and if, after his landing, the season had been favourable, he might, with 15,000 men, have marched to Amsterdam, and thus at once finished the expedition. But this was not the case, and therefore he had said, that the winds and the clouds were the cause of the failure of this part of the object of the expedition.

Lord HOLLAND explained; and he assured Lord Mulgrave, that he had neither understood him as saying, nor meant to insinuate that he had said any thing the least reflecting on Sir Ralph Abercromby.

Lord DARNLEY also explained.

Lord GRENVILLE approved of the motives which prompted the Earl of Moira to endeavour to put an end to the discussion ; yet said he should be sorry that this motion should be disposed of by the previous question, lest it should imply that His Majesty's Ministers would be inclined to refuse an inquiry, were sufficient ground for it laid down. To him it appeared that no ground whatever had been made out. It had not been shewn that there was any thing wrong in the original plan, that it had been conducted improperly, or that it had failed in its objects. He therefore hoped the noble Earl (Moira) would withdraw his proposal for the previous question, as he should otherwise have to oppose it, in order to give his negative afterwards to the original motion.

The Earl of MOIRA restated the motives which induced him to move the previous question, in order to relieve Ministers from the necessity of arguing the grounds upon which they would oppose the motion ; but avoided delivering himself any opinion on the subject beyond what he originally mentioned. However, if the noble Lord (Grenville) thought that his motion would admit of any unfavourable construction, he was willing to withdraw it.

The motion for the previous question was accordingly withdrawn.

The House then divided on the original motion for the inquiry, upon which the numbers were :—Contents, 6 ; Non-contents, 34 ; Proxies, 17 ;—51. Majority against the motion, 45.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, February 12.

Lord HAWKESBURY moved that a Committee should be appointed for considering farther measures for improving the port of London, and that the said Committee be appointed to report to the House from time to time. Agreed to.

Mr. BRAGGE brought up the Report of the Committee on the bill for enabling His Majesty to accept of the voluntary services of the Militia, and on the Military Seduction Bill ; both of which were ordered to be engrossed.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that a Select Committee be appointed to consider the petition yesterday presented by Sir William Pulteney on behalf of Mr. M'Dowal, one of the Members of the House. Agreed to.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, that an humble address be presented to His Majesty, praying him to order to be laid before the House the proceedings of the Privy Council relative to the ships taken at Mogadore. Agreed to.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee of Supply, and Mr. Bragge having taken the chair,

Mr. WALLACE said, that in moving the resolution which was to meet the expence of the ordinary estimate of the navy for the present year, he felt it his duty to call the attention of the Committee to some particulars in which this estimate would be found to vary from those which, in preceding years, had been laid before the House. The variation arose from regulations recently introduced into the naval departments, in consequence of the different reports of the Committee of Finance and Commissioners of Inquiry. As the result, however, of those regulations might not be apparently that which the expectation of some gentlemen might have looked to, and the official expence in the naval departments would seem rather augmented than diminished, as well for the purpose of explanation to the Committee, as for that of precluding, if possible, every misrepresentation on the subject, he thought it right to state, as distinctly as he was able, the amount and nature of the augmentation that had taken place, the offices in which it had taken place, and the general grounds on which it had been deemed advisable that it should do so.

Since the last year, he said, alterations had been made in the office of Admiralty, and in the Victualling-office. He would begin with the office of Admiralty, and state the comparative expence of the present and proposed establishments. The actual expence of the office, exclusive of fees, amounted to the sum of 13,393l.; under the new regulation it would amount to 23,070l.; making a difference of 9,677l. But as the fees were in future to be received for the benefit of the Public, the average of them was to be set against this sum. The average, taken at thirty years, amounted to about 5,267l. From this, however, was to be deducted, for the payment of taxes on the salaries of the secretaries and clerks, the sum of 3,889l. which left only 1,378l. to be placed against 9,677l.; making a total increase on the war establishment of 8,299l. But as it was to be hoped a state of war was to be considered only as a temporary one, he must add the certain reductions on the return of peace, which, with the taxes on them, would not be less than 3,617l. leaving a permanent increase, in time of peace, of 4,682l. This calculation, he stated, was formed on the reduction that would take place in the salaries, supposing the num-

ber of persons now employed to be retained, and was therefore evidently overcharged. If we were blessed by the restoration of peace—not such peace as had been recommended from the other side of the House, but peace on terms of such security as admitted of our dispensing with a part of our means of defence, by a considerable reduction of our naval establishment;—in that case a smaller number of clerks would be sufficient to conduct the business of the office; but as that number must depend on the extent of that establishment it would be thought prudent to maintain, and was a matter of uncertainty, it was not taken into the account; whatever it was, however, it would operate to a farther reduction of the expence of the office beyond what he had stated.

The augmentation arose from an increase it was deemed expedient to make in the salaries of every office in the department, two or three excepted. The first were those of the Lords Commissioners. With respect to them, the Committee would recollect, that the Navy Board and Transport Board were both subordinate to the Board of Admiralty; that the salaries of the Commissioners in both had been fixed at 1,000*l.* clear of all deductions; that this had been recognized by the votes of Parliament as an income not more than adequate to the situation. If that was so, it could hardly be contended that, comparing the relative stations, duties, and responsibility, to be placed, in point of income at least, on a footing equally with them, was not in justice due to the Lords of the Admiralty. The argument, he thought, would bear him farther; but to this point only the augmentation had gone. At present the Lords received respectively a clear income from the public of 859*l.* a year; in future they would receive 1,000*l.*—the sum originally intended for them, but reduced by different taxes to the amount he mentioned. The increase was about 140*l.* to each, in the whole something less than 1,000*l.* But as it was to be made by the payment of the taxes, it appeared more; and the expence of the Board, which (exclusive of 2,000*l.* to the first Lord) was 7,679*l.* would be in future 8,925*l.*—The next offices were those of the Secretaries: they stood at present at 2,820*l.* not including the fees; they would become 6,000*l.*; a great advance on the face of it, both above the actual establishment, and the income recommended by the Commissioners of Inquiry. He observed, that the sum taken by the Commissioners of Inquiry as a permanent income for the first Secretary, was considerably below his actual receipts in a year of profound peace. The Lords of the Admiralty had certainly taken a point above the usual receipts in time of peace, in recommending 3,000*l.* as his permanent salary, but had

fallen very much below his receipts in time of war, notwithstanding the addition of 1,000*l.* in consideration of the great additional business war produced. On the whole, he thought, taking a long average of the receipts, that the probable saving to the public on this office would not be less than 1,000*l.* a year. Though he admitted that the receipt of fees was not the only criterion by which the permanent income of office should be fixed, yet neither could it be justly laid out of mind; and that, combined with other considerations, had governed the recommendation of the Admiralty Board in the present instance. The first consideration naturally presenting itself, was, what had been deemed proper for stations in any degree corresponding to that of the Secretary of the Admiralty. It appeared that the Secretaries of the Treasury and War-office had been fixed at 3,000*l.*; and on a comparison between the situations, they saw no reason for estimating the office in question lower, or creating in it a degree of inferiority which had not been supposed to subsist before: he was sure it was not a matter of indifference how such offices were filled, and that it would be an improvident œconomy that should ever make them cease to be objects of ambition to those who possessed qualifications to fulfil the duties of them with advantage to the Public. It was not the mere drudgery of business, or the quantity of labour to be supported, that was alone to be considered; they must look also to the confidence necessarily reposed in the persons holding them. In this view, the Secretary of the Admiralty had been looked at, not as the person who was daily to prepare a certain number of letters, or to dispatch a certain number of orders, but as the necessary depositary of unlimited confidence in a department of the highest national importance, on which a great proportion of the wealth, the commerce, the power, the glory, and he might add, the safety of the kingdom particularly relied. If the Committee felt as he did, that all the zeal, integrity, and talents that could be found, were not more than requisite in such a situation, he trusted they would agree with him in thinking the provision made, though liberal (as it ought to be), was far from being liable to the charge of profusion—When he adverted to the merits of the gentleman who actually held the office, he felt it even inadequate: if it were possible for a servant of the Public to create a claim to the thanks of his country in the execution of the duties of his station; if the devotion of time, of health, and talents; if unwearied zeal, indefatigable attention, unexampled regularity and dispatch, to which was to be ascribed no small portion of that unparalleled success which had attended our naval operations in the present contest; if this could confer such a

claim, he most eminently possessed it. The general observations applied equally to the second Secretary, as holding in his degree similar trust with similar labour and attendance imposed upon him. The remainder of the augmentation was to be referred to the increased salaries of the clerks, &c. The general principle on which the Admiralty had proceeded in recommending it was this: That the Public ought, if possible, to have the first choice of persons best qualified to serve in the various subordinate situations in its different departments; and certain ideas of advantage were attached to the service of the Public above that of individuals. This was sufficient to furnish that choice as long as the incomes to be obtained bore a fair relation to each other; and that it was their business to take care, as far as they were concerned, that the proportion should not be destroyed. This consideration, with the conviction that the same persons could, by applying the same industry and talents in other lines, have secured to themselves equal incomes, had governed the various augmentations of salary in question. He hoped the principle would not appear an unwise one, or the practical application of it, in the present instance, meet the disapprobation of the Committee.

He now called their attention to what had been done in the Victualling-office, where, he said, the apparent increase was much greater than in the former case, because a much greater proportion of the incomes had been derived from fees and allowances. He stated as an illustration, the case of a Commissioner of the Board. A Commissioner received on the estimate 400*l.*; in addition, he had 145*l.* for house rent, &c., and, in consequence of business transferred to the office in 1794, an allowance of 250*l.* by a bill from the Treasury; so that, though he appeared only to have a salary of 400*l.* he received, in fact, from the Public, an income of 760*l.*; and although the addition on the estimate was 400*l.* by making the future income 800*l.* it amounted, in truth, only to 40*l.* This was all the addition made to the Commissioners. There was some farther increase to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, in consideration of a great increase of business and attendance which had been imposed upon them. The remaining increase, and (as before) the principal one, was made on the subordinate situations, and on the same principle as had before been stated. The total increase in the salaries and establishment amounted to 21,810*l.* the present establishment being 26,389*l.* the augmented one 48,199*l.* This, it was to be recollected, was the war expence, which would, from the nature of the office, admit a very great diminution on the return of peace.

Against this 21,810*l.* were to be placed the fees received in the office, which, on an average of three years, rather exceeded 26,000*l.* It was not intended that these should be received and carried to the account of the Public, in discharge of the augmentation he had mentioned, but, in pursuance of the recommendation of the Committee of Finance, they were to be totally abolished; and the abolition of them, he contended, would operate a relief to the Public as complete and effectual as if they continued to be received, and were applied in aid of its burthens. The fees were principally paid on contracts. It was superfluous to state, that a merchant, accustomed to pay a certain fee or per centage on an article supplied by him to the public, must add it to the price of the article so supplied. It would not admit of a doubt, then, that thus far these fees had been really paid to the country. It might, indeed, be here asked, what security there was for their being no longer so? For though a merchant would certainly make an addition on account of a fee to be paid, it was not equally clear he would make a reduction on its abolition. The security appeared to him the best; it was competition, and the obvious interest of the party. The contracts were always made on tenders received from the persons disposed to supply the articles wanted. No man would make a tender without a desire to obtain the contract; he would therefore make it as low as he could, consistently with securing to himself a fair mercantile profit. If then the fee entered, as it must have done, into his calculation, and obliged him, as well as his competitors, while it was to be paid, to make a proportioned addition to their respective tenders, the same desire would operate equally on the abolition of it to secure to the Public a corresponding reduction. He thought, considering these fees as in some measure voluntary, and aware that, on fees so paid, the advantage to the person paying generally extended beyond the immediate object for which they were ostensibly paid—he might take credit for a saving to the public much beyond that of 26,000*l.*; but with that, for the purpose of his present argument, he was content. There was another benefit which had already resulted from the abolition of fees in this office that he could not pass over without notice: The commissions on articles purchased by commission in the victualling had usually amounted to 30,000*l.* per annum: on these commissions a fee had been paid. The abolition of the fee had afforded an opportunity, which was immediately seized, to reduce the commissions one sixth. They were so reduced, and a consequent saving made of 5,000*l.* a year. The result, then, of the statements he was desirous of submitting to the Committee was, that, for the reasons he had troubled

them with, the expence of the office of Admiralty was immediately increased about 8,299l.; in the Victualling-office about 21,000l.; that to balance these there was a saving, partly by the application and partly by the abolition of fees, that might fairly be estimated at not less than 31,000l. a year; and that he had therefore the satisfaction to feel, that, notwithstanding the necessary augmentations that had been made, the public expence would rather be diminished than increased; and so far the hopes of those from whom the inquiries had originated that laid the foundation of the regulations now carried into effect, were realized, though the apparent result was the contrary.

If, however, he found the arrangements advantageous in a pecuniary point of view, he thought there was another in which they were much more so. It had long been felt that a disproportion between the wages for public service, and those offered by individuals, highly unfavourable to the former, existed; circumstances were daily making that disproportion greater, and some measures were become absolutely necessary to avoid what would not have been less discredit than prejudicial to the Public—the reducing those who had spent their life in its service, and were become unfit for other employment, to penury and distress, and imposing upon others who were able to transfer their industry and talents the necessity of betaking themselves to situations where they would find an ampler and juster compensation. He lamented any increase to the national burthens, as well as any thing that deprived the country of relief, to whatever extent; and had concurred in the recommendation on which these regulations had been made, only from a conscientious conviction that the interest of the Public was more truly consulted in securing to it a succession of able and diligent servants, than in giving it that relief which could have been derived by withholding the present moderate augmentation of the appointments of office. He was not one of those that ever believed a diminution of the salaries of office was practicable, much less in a degree to make it a public object. From regulation, from checks in the expenditure, and precautions against frauds, important advantages might be looked for; to those the expectation of the country must be directed: but for the salaries received in official stations, he doubted not what had here appeared would be the case in most of the departments; that so far from reform and reduction being necessary, the strictest examination would only discover an irresistible claim to augmentation, on every consideration of justice, to those who executed the duties of

them, as well as regard to the public service and real interest of the country.

Mr. HARRISON said, that he would not oppose this increase of the salaries proposed by Mr. Wallace. The office of Secretary of the Admiralty he considered as highly important, and he saw no reason why there should be a distinction made in his salary from that granted to other servants of the Crown. At the same time he thought, that in a business so intricate longer time ought to have been granted to gentlemen to consider well, before they consented to such an increase of the public burdens.

Captain BARCLAY and Mr. BURDON each said a few words in favour of the motion.

Mr. TIERNEY said, he thought that by the present motion, it was attempted, as if by a side-wind, to make the House sanction the peace establishment of all those officers and these additional salaries. He approved much of the increase of the salaries of the clerks, for he always would be an enemy to starving the public service. But he reserved to himself the right of opposing the continuance of this increase in time of peace, and he only now consented to it on the ground that he should be allowed to use the same arguments for the increase of the salaries of half-pay officers and the inferior classes of the clergy, whose claims were certainly as urgent, when he should bring this subject before the House. Mr. Tierney then adverted to the reasonableness of the increase of the salaries of gentlemen in office, in consequence of the additional expence of living in consequence of the war, and argued, that if a country gentleman was obliged to sacrifice a tenth of his income to bear the expences of this war, and could have no remuneration, there could be but little reasonableness in increasing the incomes of gentlemen in office, merely to remunerate them for the expences to which, in common with all the rest of the country, they were subjected; and that there was still less reason for making this increase permanent, when the cause upon which it is granted may no longer exist. He repeated, that he was not adverse to the increase of the salaries of the clerks, but he was adverse to imposing such an additional burden upon the country, and he saw no reason for the country being subjected to it. If a gentleman kept a number of servants, and they even produced a well-founded claim, and a claim which he admitted, to additional wages, what would be the language which a prudent man would use? He would say, "I feel the same pressure that you do; and though your claim is just, you must either remain with me upon your old wages, or I must do with a servant less." Why might not a similar plan be adopted in the offices under Govern-

ment? Were such a plan adopted, he believed that it would be attended with success; and that few would resign their situations, because their salary was not increased, and many offices under Government, would, he believed, be willingly filled by gentlemen, without regard to pecuniary considerations. As to the Secretary of the Admiralty, no man could be more disposed to acknowledge his merits and deserts than he was; but if 1,000*l.* a year was a sufficient salary for a Lord of the Admiralty, surely 2,000*l.* was not inadequate to the services of the Secretary to the Admiralty. Besides the addition of 1,000*l.* a year granted in the time of war to a Member of that House, was certainly no great inducement for him to wish for peace; and if in 1796 the salaries of all the under Secretaries of State, and of the Admiralty, were fixed at what was then conceived to be an adequate compensation for their services, surely such a difference as an addition of one-third could not have already become necessary. The Secretary of the Admiralty too, even if his salary as Secretary was not thought sufficient, had an office in the West Indies, of very considerable emolument, which would supply the deficiency. As to the saving of 26,000*l.* in the Victualling Office, alledged by Mr. Wallace, he did not see that there was any security for its being saved, except this security was to be drawn from human nature, a security which had not, in the speculations of His Majesty's Ministers, been found worthy of being much relied on. In what but this is to be found the security, that these gentlemen will not continue to receive their usual fees? There is none. Besides, the estimates of the increase made to the salaries were formed on the profits of fees in the time of war. In the time of peace these fees would be diminished, and consequently the same saving would not be made.

Mr. Chancellor PITT expressed his surprise that the honourable gentleman opposite to him should object to his honourable friend's having set off the amount of the suppressed fees, against the proposed increase of salaries. The objection would have been reasonable, if the former salaries had actually been sufficient for the decent maintenance of the persons possessing them. But the honourable gentleman himself had admitted they were not so. In answer to the honourable gentleman's observations respecting the Secretary of the Admiralty, of whose merit there could be but one opinion, he would ask whether he did not know that the emoluments of the situation in the West Indies had been granted, not for his services in the Admiralty, but as a reward for his valuable services in several confidential situations for a period of eighteen years? Was it fair then to deduct from the claims he had on the public for his

current services, the reward of his former services? This was a question which the honourable gentleman would surely not answer in the affirmative.

Mr. TIERNEY, in explanation, observed, that it was worthy of remark, that the Secretary of the Admiralty had 4,000*l.* a year, while the salary of the First Lord of the Admiralty was not above 3,000*l.*

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that the office of the First Lord of the Admiralty was one to which men aspired with a patriotic ambition, men whose fortune rendered the consideration of a salary a secondary one. It was true, nevertheless, that that high office deserved a higher salary.

Mr. TIERNEY again explained.

Mr. W. SMITH wished for an open competition for the offices of Government, which would give to talent and real merit a fair chance of just distinction.

Mr. BAKER ridiculed the idea of open bidding; and asked if the honourable gentleman wished Government to advertise for candidates to fill offices of the first distinction and responsibility.

Mr. WALLACE now moved the several resolutions in succession; which being read, were agreed to.

Mr. WINDHAM then rose to move the Supplies of the Army. He stated, that the estimates now before the House were for the whole year; but that, in the resolution he meant to propose, the sums already granted would be deducted, and the House required to vote only the difference. He did not mean to make any observations as to the particular estimates. But it would, perhaps, be gratifying to gentlemen, to find that the number of troops proposed for the service of this year was less by 32,000 than the military establishment of former years. This reduction was effected in the least disposable part of our force, such as the militia and fencible corps; while it enabled us to increase the regular troops by an addition of nearly 48,000. The establishment of the two years immediately preceding the last was 225,000, and that of the last 207,000. But the total amount of the troops of every description which he would move for the service of the current year did not exceed the number of 192,000. There would consequently be found a reduction in the estimates of expence of about 500,000*l.* This saving was not merely calculated from the diminution in the troops to be employed; but was grounded likewise upon a variety of arrangements, which he would not now trouble the House with describing in detail. One of them related to the quartering of soldiers; and, though it was not completely matured, he had no doubt

but that it would be found extremely beneficial to the service, as well as a great saving to the public. There was likewise a deduction of about 9,000l. in the charges for staff officers. But as gentlemen might suppose, notwithstanding this saving upon the whole, that, on a comparison with the estimates of former years, there was an increase on the particular estimates of the present, it was necessary to apprise them that the latter contained several new heads of expence; one of which related to a corps of waggoners and pioneers, and the others would be easily discovered, by a reference to the accounts now on the table. The whole amount of the expences of the army, for this year, would be found to amount to about 8,854,000l. The honourable Member then moved a series of resolutions, applying to the different branches of the military service; all of which were agreed to.

In the course of passing the resolutions, Mr. Smith observed, that there was a singular disproportion between the diminution in the expences and the reduction of the troops; the former being only in the proportion of one sixteenth of the whole, while the latter was one sixth.

Mr. WINDHAM replied, that by referring to the estimates, the honourable gentleman would find that disproportion completely accounted for, by the introduction of a variety of new articles of expenditure.

The House was then resumed. The Report was ordered to be received to-morrow; and the Committee was ordered to sit again on Friday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, February 13.

Lord GRENVILLE presented the following Message from His Majesty:

GEORGE R.

His Majesty is at present employed in concerting such engagements with the Emperor of Germany, the Elector of Bavaria, and other powers of the empire, as may strengthen the efforts of His Imperial Majesty, and materially conduce to the advantage of the common cause in the course of the ensuing campaign; and His Majesty will give directions that these engagements, as soon as they shall have been completed and ratified, shall be laid before the House: but, in order to ensure the

benefit of this co-operation at an early period, His Majesty is desirous of authorising His Minister to make provisionally such advances as may be necessary, in the first instance, for this purpose; and His Majesty recommends it to the House to enable him to make such provision accordingly.

G. R.

The Message being read, his Lordship moved that it be taken into consideration to-morrow, and that the Lords be summoned, Ordered.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, February 13.

Mr. BRAGGE brought up the Report of the Committee of Supply, and the various resolutions were read and agreed to.

The Militia Volunteer Bill, and Army and Navy Seduction Bill, were read a third time, and passed.

Mr. Chancellor PITT brought up the list of persons confined under the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus; which was read over, and ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt then presented a Message from His Majesty, similar to that delivered in the House of Lords [See page 523.]

Mr. Chancellor Pitt said, he would move to have the Message taken into consideration to-morrow; at which time it was his intention to move that the House should on Monday next resolve itself into a Committee of Supply; when he should move a sum for subsidizing the troops that should be furnished by those powers alluded to in His Majesty's Message. He thought proper to mention that the sum he intended to apply for was not to exceed 500,000l.

Mr. SHERIDAN wished to know whether the number of Russians in British pay was to be less during the ensuing campaign, or whether the same number as last year, or any number of them, should be kept up together with the other troops that were to be subsidized by this country?

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he could not speak with certainty as to that question; but he did not think it likely that the number of Russian troops would be so great during the ensuing as in the last campaign; nor had he any reason to suppose that the allies would not have the benefit of the greatest part of those troops that were

subsidized last year. The object now was to maintain such a force on the Continent as should enable the allies to make greater efforts than they had done in any other campaign, even should the Russians not co-operate to the same extent as last year.

The Message was then ordered to be taken into consideration to-morrow.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL rose, pursuant to notice, to move for the renewal of the act to enable His Majesty to secure and detain persons who should be suspected of conspiring against his person and government; which act would expire on the first of March next. Since the last passing of the bill, the disposition of the country was not changed with regard to the machinations of those persons who were to be the objects of the bill; and therefore if the House thought it a fit and proper measure last year, they must think so now. The country might at this time be in a state of greater safety than it was a year or two ago; but it was impossible to read the whole of the Report of the Committee of that House, published last year, without being convinced that there were persons in this country who would disturb the peace of it, if any opportunity presented itself. The peace of the country had been already preserved by the powers which this act vested in the hands of Government. Conceiving it necessary, therefore, to continue the same powers, he would move for leave to bring in a bill to continue the act of last session.

Mr. JONES conceived the loyalty of the country at this time to be so great, as to render a bill of this kind unnecessary; and he never would consent to an act that placed unlimited power in the hands of Ministers over the liberties and lives of the whole country. It would be better to repeal the Habeas Corpus Act at once.

Mr. BUXTON valued the Habeas Corpus Act as much as any man, but he thought this bill should be continued, because he did not believe those persons who had adopted Jacobinical principles had in the smallest degree abandoned them. It was to the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act that the Members of that House owed the liberty they then enjoyed of sitting there. The war in which we were engaged was, in his mind, carried on against Jacobin principles; and as long as they continued in France (and they did continue there still), so long must this country be at war. If he thought the objects of Ministers was the restoration of the Bourbons, and not the destruction of Jacobinism, he would for one oppose their measures.

Mr. SHERIDAN declared, that at no time should he be easily persuaded to vote for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act;

and less than ever now, when we were called upon to part with this palladium of our liberties, not from the disaffection of any in this country, but because there are dangerous principles in another. The honourable gentleman had said, that so long as the spirit of Jacobinism existed in France, he should always vote for this Suspension. So then, supposing any other country in Europe should adopt Jacobinical principles, and France should renounce them, according to this doctrine Great Britain must still remain deprived of the benefits of the Habeas Corpus Act! This he considered as the greatest possible insult that could be offered to the whole nation. Was Parliament to turn its eyes over the whole world, and not to be satisfied with the loyalty of the people of this country, and their patience under the greatest privations? Was all this to go for nothing with Ministers so long as the spirit of Jacobinism existed in other countries? Better give up the Habeas Corpus entirely, and cut it off from the British Constitution! Supposing the arguments of the honourable gentleman were to be applied by him to the Crown, because there were despots in other countries, appointing their arbitrary Judges, despoiling kingdoms, and even dethroning Sovereigns, was he on this account to argue, that our Monarch was not to be allowed his lawful power, at least till such time as he saw despots and their Ministers in other countries acting properly? Would the honourable gentleman say, that there were any appearances of treason now in the country? But he said that nothing particular had passed since to alter his determination. And yet, though nothing of a seditious nature had passed, this Suspension was to be continued. It was for him, and those who acted with him, to call upon Ministers to say what had occurred since the last passing of the act, or even to point out the continuance of that spirit of disaffection which the Report stated had existed in 1798 and 1799. Not one of the imprisoned persons, during that period, although severely treated, had been brought to trial. And how many had been taken up since April 1799? It appeared by the list that there were only two; one Irishman and one Swedish Baron. But perhaps Ministers might say, you shall not avail yourself of this argument in future, for we will take up a batch of fifteen or twenty. Why had so few been taken up for the last year? Had Ministers become more negligent of their duty, or has there been less cause for alarm? As he could not suppose the former, he thought therefore that there was sufficient reason for not continuing the Suspension, as treasonable practices had so much diminished. Mr. Sheridan argued, that Ministers under this act could only commit persons upon information on oath, and that all other commitment was ille-

gal: and he thought it peculiarly unjust, that persons should be kept for years in prison without being brought to trial, because proof sufficient could not be brought against them. The only reason why more people were not taken up, was, he believed, because Ministers were convinced that no conspiracy existed; for there was sufficient proof, either that the spirit of disaffection was trifling, or that it would be severely punished. It was cruel that the people at large should be deprived of their privileges, merely because one Irishman and one Swedish Baron had been committed since April 1799! As matters were managed, he would recommend it to the people of England, to petition the House of Commons to repeal at once the Habeas Corpus Act, and to give Ministers a dictatorial power.

The SECRETARY AT WAR said, that his motive for calling the attention of the House was, to observe upon some parts of the speech of the honourable gentleman, who had treated some topics in an exaggerated way, and had pushed to excess the expressions of his honourable friend who had just spoken before him. The question was not whether certain opinions in France would justify the taking any measures in this country; but the honourable gentleman was in the same situation as many others seem to have been for a great while, that of having forgotten there was such a thing as the French Revolution. He should have thought that if it had not been for that forgetfulness, the honourable gentleman, as well as many others, would have felt that these opinions had overturned State after State, and that all governments, and all the civil communities of Europe had been affected by them, most materially. Nor indeed had their operation been confined to Europe, for these opinions, and the principles upon which they were founded, had travelled even out of Europe, and by their elastic force had risen, and although pressed down, had again risen; and wherever they went they carried with them a contagious disease to the unthinking part of the community in every country in Europe. That this country had escaped the contagion better than any other, was not owing to the political sentiments that were publicly maintained by the honourable gentleman. These things were now so plain and clear, that to attempt to bring proofs of them, would be superfluous and idle. If we looked to Ireland, we should hardly find that these observations were less applicable than they were to this country. This shewed that the mischief of the opinions which were taken notice of by his honourable friend were not confined to France; and as there was no reason to suppose that the operation of these opinions had ceased, we were perfectly warranted in approving of what was stated by his honourable friend. With re-

spect to that ingenious turn which the honourable gentleman had given to it, by comparing the case of Monarchy, in a possible abuse of power, with the possible abuse of every thing that is dear to mankind by the operation of French principles, he would only say, that upon that subject he had no objection to close with the honourable gentleman, and allow the truth of all the mischief he predicted, if he could shew any probability whatever of the example or the councils of any of the monarchies of Europe having any effect whatever to the prejudice of his subjects upon the Monarch of Great Britain. If we were really likely to have such danger brought upon us from that source, he should be ready to fall in with the conclusion of the honourable gentleman in that particular. The cases, however, were not at all parallel, and therefore no inference could be drawn from the one, which applied solely to the other. The honourable gentleman had always opposed the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and he would not be very consistent with himself if he did not oppose it now. But the question was not what the honourable gentleman might do, but what the House of Commons should do upon this subject; and in the determination of that, another question arose, which was, whether any such change has taken place since the last Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, as to require measures different from those which Parliament has hitherto pursued, by way of general safety? Now, upon that subject he must contend, that we were not warranted in saying there is no symptom now of the mischief which we formerly dreaded, and therefore the Habeas Corpus Act should not now be suspended; but he was very far from being sure that such manner of reasoning was to be adopted, or that the reverse was not to be in some measure taken up, because the very cessation of the mischief proved, to a certain extent, the efficacy of the remedy, and therefore the non-appearance of the evil, instead of being a reason for taking off the remedy, was a reason for its continuance, otherwise the House must come to this sort of reason: "We will repeal the act, because we have found it to be efficacious." The case was indeed open to two ways of reasoning; for he believed that both were in a degree true. He believed that the quiet of the country was partly owing to this act, and he believed also that there was a change in the dispositions of some parts of the country; he would say again, some parts of the country, for he begged leave to distinguish that part from the great mass of the people; for they were now, as they always had been, perfectly loyal. The numbers of the disaffected he took to be altered, because the state of the stock which supported disaffection was higher at some times than at others,

like the state of stock in another country ; but he had no doubt, that if the First Consul were to be successful, in reviving to its utmost height the pride and confidence of French power, the spirit which accompanied it before would appear again; and he thought it would be quite childish in the House to suffer itself to be misled in this way. He believed indeed that Jacobinism was on the decline, nor did he apprehend the principles of the Rights of Man to be so popular as they had been ; but he hoped the House would not be off its guard by thinking that all danger was at an end ; for many of these things disappeared for the purpose of giving them more effect when they should appear again. Here the disaffected stood upon the badness of their own character, by saying, " we are so degraded that nobody will give us credit, and therefore it is quite unnecessary to make any provision against us." He hoped, however, the House would not be so premature as to act upon any confidence of this kind. The smallness of the number of Jacobins in this country arose in a great measure from the discretion of these persons ; for they felt that by the act they were subject to punishment, and therefore they were silent. Beside this, it took away the power of these men whom nothing but the want of power would render harmless. He knew the extensive mischief such men were capable of doing, and it was such as a good man would dread to think of ; as a proof of this, he knew of a man who was put upon his trial, and on which the Jury (for proper reasons no doubt) acquitted him, but he would not be so childish as to say, that therefore he was tied down by that decision of the Jury (though acquitted rightly and properly, perhaps for a defect of evidence, accidentally happening, or otherwise) from saying that he might still be of opinion he was really guilty, and he would therefore wish to put such a person in a situation in which it would not be in his power to do any more mischief. Besides, every thing being quiet at this moment, was no proof that there was no plot in existence. What was the case in Ireland ? A plot was discovered by information of an accomplice, and other means, which if it had not, within 24 hours the capital might have been in ashes and streaming in blood—it was a plot that was discovered at once, as by lemon juice hidden characters are rendered legible. He did not mean to say, that the metropolis of Great Britain had ever been exposed to the same danger ; nor did he mean to say that these considerations made up the strongest reasons for the continuance of the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act ; but he did say these were some reasons for it. The number of disaffected persons he believed was not so great as it had been ; but he did not believe the disposition of the disaffected

in France to all establishments in the world was altered ; he believed it was there in full vigour still, and so he believed it to be in this country by those who had any real affection for French principles. The general ground he laid down was, that there was no preferable change in the dispositions of the disaffected to the establishments of this country that would justify the House in departing from that salutary caution which they had hitherto adopted ; and therefore he could not help saying he hoped that this bill would be continued.

Sir FRANCIS BURDETT said, that Ministers seemed to pass this bill, the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus, as a matter now of course, without even assigning the reasons that induce them to have recourse to such a measure. The general reason of Jacobin principles, principles not even yet defined, furnished them hitherto with pretexts for depriving the subject of one of his most estimable privileges. This reason, he was inclined to think, was done away, and he would wish to know upon what grounds they were now to proceed. He was at a loss to know what was meant by the expressions of gentlemen on the other side of the House, by Jacobin principles being on the decline in this country, unless they meant the principles of Liberty were so. An honourable Member (Mr. Buxton), had denied that the war is carrying on for the House of Bourbon. The object of the war had changed so often, one time for principles of order and religion, another time for the defence of our allies, and then for the defence of ourselves, that one really knew not what to depend upon. The right honourable Secretary at War, asks, Is there nothing to dread from the conduct of the French, from the contagion of their principles and the mischiefs which they almost every where produce ? He would ask him, whether there was nothing to dread from the breaking down the barriers of the Constitution, erecting of barracks throughout the kingdom, perverting the purposes of the Militia, and perpetually passing the Suspension of this law, which secures to the subject his freedom ; and on this he would ask him what security remains ? He had not language, he confessed, to express what he felt on the repeated Suspension of the Act of Habeas Corpus. Was any part of our Constitution preferable to another, it was this act ; which if removed, left very little difference between one government and another. He asked, whether two years imprisonment were not sufficient for those unhappy persons who were in confinement ; and whether their detention from justice did not argue a fear in Ministers to bring them to trial ? He said their innocence was the cause of their detention, and in proof of that he asked to have them brought to trial. To whom

was such power to be given as the present bill called for? To those who already abused it. To those who, upon illegal warrants, upon the warrants of clerks in offices, persons not known to the Constitution, were passed into the hands of Bow Street ruffians, who went under their authority down to Manchester, and dragged from their own houses, at night, and under the cries of their families, the masters of those families, hand-cuffed, and loaded with irons, to Clerkenwell prison, where they were lodged, and where they were under torture of mind and body. When out of their hands, they applied to the humanity of the jailor for relief, in consequence of the swellings of their legs, occasioned by the treatment of those savages. He would be glad to know, what the father of the right honourable gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would have said on the recital of such conduct and such treatment. Would he not have reprobated it; would he not have said, that the cottage of the Peasant was as sacred as the palace of the Prince? Though humbly thatched, yet it was secure, and the King could not lay a finger on it: yet this asylum was violated. Were that illustrious character now alive, the thunder of his eloquence would shake the House about their ears; and the avenues would be crowded with auditors impatient for the decision. He would raise a storm from which they would be glad to hide their heads, and hasten to their homes. But he (Sir Francis) was not so inexperienced as not to know the character of that House; (*a call to the Chair*)—he knew it was power, not language: and that majorities in that House did not depend upon reasoning. [*The Speaker here interposed, suggesting the impropriety of the expression.*] Sir Francis resumed his speech, in reference to the conduct of the Attorney General, and said, he did not forget his predecessor in that station. He had passed to power through the gradations of similar services to those the present directed his attention to, and was now on the way to the first high station in the kingdom. He (Sir Francis) would yet do his endeavours to stop that system of tyranny and corruption which fastened on the country; and though there was much cause to complain of the 8,000 prisoners delivered up on the failure of the late expedition, yet he did not complain so much of the surrender of these, as he did of those who were illegally, unjustly, and cruelly confined.

Mr. CANNING said, that if any gentleman could bring himself to think that the Jacobin principles had ceased to produce their mischievous effects, or could imagine for a moment that they were shamed or run down in this country as yet, the honourable Baronet's speech would contradict it. That those principles had raged through Europe, and produced such mighty mischiefs, and that the honour-

able Baronet should profess his ignorance of them, gifted as he is with considerable talents and eloquence, he considered as a grave and serious caution to gentlemen, lest they should be imposed on as the honourable Baronet certainly was, when he confessed that the only conjecture he could make of those principles was, that they were principles of Liberty ; when the honourable Baronet knows, as he certainly must know, that by those principles the governments of Europe were overthrown ; when by those principles, aided by the sword, and the sword edged in turn by those principles, not only the governments that were free, but even the strongest despotisms of Europe have been attacked and shaken ; for on them the storm has most heavily fallen. Yet, after all this waste and desolation, this country is safe. The honourable Baronet is of opinion, that there is no security in the country, because it has resisted what he calls principles of freedom ; and because it is determined to resist those principles, it is tyranny and oppression. What the operation of those principles are, all who are supposed to see, can judge. What his right honourable friend said, was not that the great mass was infected in this country, for they were sound ; but that factions still remained, who are looking round for a wide range for their ambition, and who, on invitation, are ready to ruin their country. The events on the Continent furnished to such factions hopes and views for ambitious projects. For these two or three years there was nothing in France that could either encourage or prompt ambition. But now there was the example of one man, for the first time risen to the height of power. In former attempts all who had enterprized for eminence, or intrigued for power, were indiscriminately swept off to the scaffold, and intercepted in the midst of their career : and if ever there was an excuse for ambition it is now. The Jacobin principles, so far from giving way, have gained an ascendant in the present Usurper. Does Bonaparte renounce the conduct and crimes of his predecessors ? Certainly not. We had the misfortune to put the question to him ; and misfortune it may be called. So far is he from dismissing the accomplices of those crimes, he keeps them by his person. Though a military despot, he is a Jacobin in his heart. In him the Jacobin principles have a certain pledge for all the mischiefs they can produce, and all the schemes of ambition they may pursue. An honourable gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) put a question on the conduct of foreign Princes towards their subjects, and asked to know, whether in their case of misconduct, we should impute a similar attempt to our Monarch at home ? He had no objection to this question, had he put it distinctly. Had any Monarch been seduced by the example of foreign

potentates so as to infringe the laws, and attempt to destroy the Constitution (as James the Second who was fatally infected by the example of Louis XIV.) the country would certainly now, as it did then, interfere in defence of its laws and Constitution. This was a point in direct answer to his honourable friend, in our own history. He would then call upon the honourable Baronet, and ask him if religion, under the most black and malignant effects of its superstition, was at all comparable to the bigger mischiefs produced by this horrible superstition that overturned Thrones, Powers and Principalities, together with all their dependencies, wherever it went? This contagion still continued to rage, and it was our duty to guard against the example; for that was enough to produce the effect. When it was asserted, that in two years His Majesty's Ministers took up but two or three persons for their practices, he would assert, this was an argument that they were Ministers, who were not inclined to abuse their trust. The one of these was a Swedish Baron, who had been naturalized, and he thought this furnished a hint to the Legislature to be sparing of that favour, or at least cautious in future. On the honourable Baronet's charge of the cruelty of the arrest of those persons at Manchester, he thought it might furnish language for a modern novel. He did not know why a warrant should not be executed by night as well as by day. The officers arrived there at night, and to prevent an escape secured their prisoners. The House was entered by legal instruments, and they acted according to law. He admitted, that the cottage was as secure as the palace; and one of the main objects of the war was to maintain that equal security; but the French had made one indiscriminate wide waste of cottages and palaces. Thanks to Parliament in this country, it has been so, and will, by the aid of Parliament, continue so, as long as it can preserve the higher ranks of society from the infection of Jacobin principles, and the lower ranks from the seduction of them. On those reasons he would give his assent to the bill.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that Ministers were entitled to confidence, unless there appeared from their conduct and characters reasons for refusing it; and on the view of their character and conduct Parliament were now to judge whether they were persons disposed to abuse their trust. Parliament would also consider whether the persons who opposed this bill were persons who might not be imposed on, and whether they had not, under such imposition, been led solemnly to attest upon oath the characters of persons who were highly suspected, and afterwards convicted of crimes from which they then escaped. This testimony was not then given un-

der any transient and hasty act of the mind, but formally and solemnly in a Court of Justice; and he thought that such gentlemen, if they did not confess their being imposed on, should at least refrain from the discussion. This the country would expect from them. There was another fallacy that he would wish to correct, which was, when you take away the Habeas Corpus Act, you may take away all. This was not true. Many valuable rights remained, which tempered the Suspension of one another. The liberty of the press remained, and even to some degree of licentiousness. Does not liberty of speech remain? Were the liberty of the subject dammed up one way, it was open another. In the case the honourable Baronet pressed, he would ask, was not the name of the man imprisoned on the table? were not the means in their power to redress, and were not Ministers responsible for their trust? On such considerations, whatever may be urged in favour of the suppression of French principles, he thought it wise and expedient "to make assurance doubly sure." Mr. Wilberforce then entered on the defence of the conduct and character of the late Attorney General, which he highly praised, and expressed his surprise that the slightest attack should be made upon men filling the departments of the law. Whatever may be the differences of parties, he had the satisfaction to state, that the breath of calumny had never yet cast the least reproach on the Administration of Justice.

Mr. SHERIDAN observed, that he well knew the custom was to rise in explanation, if a Member found himself misrepresented; but so much had been said to which he wished to reply, that the forms of the House would not perhaps allow of his stating it as explanation. He should, however, move an amendment. He accordingly moved for leave to bring in a bill "for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, whenever it should appear manifest to the House that such a Suspension was necessary."

Mr. SPEAKER observed, that conformable to the orders of the House, and indeed to usage, no provisional order could be made. It was such a motion which the honourable Member had proposed. Hence the present motion could not be entertained, because every order must be absolute.

Mr. Chancellor PITT was of opinion, that no Member who had spoken already against the question could make a new motion, evidently with an intention of again speaking on the same question. He did not doubt but that the honourable gentleman (Mr. Sheridan) wished for an opportunity to reply; but surely, as his desire of speaking was so strong, he might have asked any of his friends near him to move an amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER said, that the House was not to presume before hand that the honourable gentleman would speak in reply. He could not, however, support any opinion that he might entertain by references to existing cases; but it was fitting to be remarked, that any honourable Member might move an adjournment of a debate in which he had already spoken.

Mr. Chancellor PITT wished to know, whether the honourable Member could move an amendment.

The MASTER OF THE ROLLS thought the rules of the House only gave the honourable Member the right of explaining.

Mr. SPEAKER repeated, that Mr. Sheridan might move to adjourn the debate; but pressed no opinion as to the motion proposed. In fact, he did not think it could be in strictness entertained by the House.

Mr. SHERIDAN observed, that one thing at least was admitted, that he might move an adjournment; and certainly if he had to consult his good wishes for the honourable Member (the Master of the Rolls) who spoke last, he would do so, as it would be but kindness to the learned gentleman to move an adjournment till he knew better the nature of such questions. He would not, however, move any adjournment; but he challenged the honourable and right honourable gentlemen opposite to him to debate the whole question with him on their own principles, on the second reading.

The question was then put on the original motion, when the House divided—

Ayes, 69; Noes, 9. Majority, 60.

The bill was afterwards brought up, read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Wednesday next.

*REPORT of the Committee of the House of Commons respecting
Bread Corn, &c. of the 10th February, 1800.*

The Committee appointed to consider of means for rendering more effectual the provisions of an act, made in the thirteenth year of the reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for better regulating the Assize and making of Bread;" and who were instructed to consider of the most effectual means of remedying any inconveniencies which may arise from the deficiency of the last Crop of Grain; and empowered to report their Proceedings, from time to time, to the House;

Have proceeded, in pursuance of the orders of the House, to consider of the provisions of the said act; and are decidedly of opinion, that the act of the 13th of George III. in its present state, is completely ineffectual for the purposes for which it was intended; that the regulations contained in it are, in many respects, defective; and that the execution of it would be totally incompatible with the present mode of setting the assize of bread by law, and would answer no object, unless, at the time when bakers are prohibited from making, according to the demand of their customers, different kinds of bread, millers should be prohibited from manufacturing different sorts of flour.

Your Committee proceeded next to consider how far it might be proper to recommend to the House to adopt such farther regulations and restrictions; and as they understood a prejudice existed in some parts of the country against any coarser sort of bread than that which is at present known by the name of the "Fine Household Bread," on the ground that the former was less wholesome and nutritious than the latter, they thought it important to obtain the opinions of some eminent and respectable physicians on this point. The result of their evidence appears to be, that although a change of any sort of food, which forms so great a part of the sustenance of man, might, for a time, affect some constitutions; that as soon as persons were habituated to it, the standard wheaten bread, or even bread of a coarser sort, would be equally wholesome with the fine wheaten bread which is now generally used in the metropolis; but that, in their opinion, the fine wheaten bread would go farther with persons who have no other food, than the same quantity of bread of a coarser sort.

Your Committee were next desirous of ascertaining, whether a standard bread was likely to be acceptable to the people of this

metropolis; they have examined for this purpose several considerable bakers, who agree in stating, that scarcely any bread is consumed in the metropolis but that which is made from the fine wheaten flour; that attempts have been formerly made in times of scarcity to introduce a coarser species of bread into use, but without success; and that, in their opinion, the high price of bread would be considered, by the lower classes of people, as a small evil, when compared with any measures which would have the effect of compelling them to consume a bread to which they have not been accustomed.

Your Committee then proceeded to inquire, whether a measure, which compelled the millers to manufacture only one sort of flour, would be likely to increase the quantity of sustenance for man. It has been stated to your Committee, that, according to the mode of manufacturing flour for London and its neighbourhood, a bushel of wheat, weighing 60lbs. produced 47lbs. of flour, of all descriptions, which were applied in various ways directly to the sustenance of man; that about 1lb. was the waste in grinding, and the remaining 12lbs. consisted of bran and pollards, which were made use of for feeding poultry, swine, and cattle. It has, however, been suggested, that if only one sort of flour was permitted to be made, and a different mode of dressing it was adopted, so as to leave in it the finer pollards, 52lb. of flour might be extracted from a bushel of wheat, of the before-mentioned weight, instead of 47lbs.; that this proportion of the wheat would afford a wholesome and nutritious food, and would add to the quantity for the sustenance of man, in places where the fine household bread is now used, 5lbs. on every bushel, or somewhat more than one-ninth. But as this saving is computed on a finer wheat, and of greater weight per bushel than the average of the crop may produce, and can only apply to those places which have been stated, and as a coarser bread is actually in use in many parts of the country, the saving on the whole consumption would, according to the calculation, be very considerably reduced.

Your Committee have considered how far other circumstances might operate, or the saving likely to be made of flour by adopting this proposition. They beg leave, in the first place, to observe, that if the physicians are well founded in their opinion, that bread of a coarser quality will not go equally far with a fine wheaten bread, an increased consumption of bread would be the consequence of the measure, and this increased consumption might, in a considerable degree, make up for any saving which might result from the use of the finer pollards. In the second place, if the millers were per-

mitted to make only one sort of flour, it is to be apprehended, that sieves would be introduced into many private families, for the purpose of sifting the flour to different degrees of fineness: such a practice might, in times of scarcity, increase the evils which it would be the intention of Parliament to remedy. The quantity of flour extracted from a bushel of wheat depends very much on the skill of the miller, and the perfection of his machinery. The extent of his concerns, and his interest in his trade, is a security that he will endeavour to draw from the grain whatever it will produce; but the comparative want of skill, and want of attention to the nicer parts of the operation, in private families, might lead, upon the whole, to a very great and unnecessary expenditure and waste of flour.

Your Committee are of opinion, that to change by law the food of a large part of the community, is a measure of the greatest delicacy, and on the face of it highly objectionable. If a considerable benefit could be proved to arise from it to the community at large, your Committee might be induced to recommend it, notwithstanding any inconveniencies which might for a time result from it; but from all the consideration your Committee have been able to give to this subject, and from the evidence which has appeared before them, they are not satisfied that any saving would arise proportionate to the disadvantages that would, in the first instance, necessarily attend upon it.

Your Committee have hitherto confined their observations to the idea of compelling the people, by law, to consume a particular sort of bread. They are sorry, however, to be under the necessity of stating, that, in consequence of the last wet and unfavourable season, the crops have been unusually deficient; and although a considerable importation of wheat from foreign countries has already taken place, and more may be expected, yet they feel, that they should not discharge their duty, unless they strongly recommended to all individuals to use every means in their power to reduce the consumption of wheaten flour in their families, and encourage in the district in which they live, by their example, influence, and authority, every possible economy of this article.

Impressed with the idea of the importance of such economy at the present moment, your Committee earnestly recommend the adoption of a measure, which, from the unanimous opinion of those who have appeared in evidence before them, would lead to a very considerable saving of wheat flour. The evidence of the bakers who have been examined before your Committee, cannot fail to convince the House, that in families where bread which has

been baked for some hours is used, the consumption is far less considerable than in those where it is the custom to eat it new. They differ in the proportion of this saving: some have stated it as amounting to one-third, some as amounting to one-fifth, and others only to one-eighth; but when it is considered that one-half of the bread in London is consumed the day on which it is baked, there can be no doubt that a great saving would ensue (perhaps one-tenth or twelfth part of the whole consumption in London), if the bakers were prohibited from selling it, until twenty-four hours after it was baked. Your Committee are strongly induced to recommend this measure, from the consideration that a very respectable physician has given it as his decided opinion, that new bread is far less wholesome than that which has been baked a certain number of hours: and they think it important to add, that, in the opinion of the bakers in the metropolis, no material inconvenience or detriment to their trade would arise from the adopting this regulation.

Your Committee have heard, with very great concern, that from the mistaken application of the charity of individuals, in some parts of the country, flour and bread have been delivered to the poor at a reduced price; a practice which may contribute very considerably to increase the inconveniencies arising from the deficiency of the last crop. And they recommend that all charity and parochial relief should be given, as far as is practicable, in any other articles except bread, flour, and money, and that the part of it which is necessary for the sustenance of the poor, should be distributed in soups, rice, potatoes, or other substitutes. Your Committee are of opinion, that if this regulation was generally adopted, it would not only, in a very great degree, contribute to economize at this time the consumption of flour, but that it might have the effect of gradually introducing into use, a more wholesome and nutritious species of food than that to which the poor are at present accustomed.

Your Committee think it important to state before they conclude, that Government, in conformity to the declaration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the last session of Parliament, have abstained from all interference in the purchases of corn in the foreign markets; and as they conceive the speculations of individuals are more likely to produce an adequate supply of foreign wheat at the present crisis, than any other measures that could be adopted, the policy of Government in this respect meets with the decided approbation of your Committee.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, February 14.

Lord AUCKLAND rose to call the attention of the House to a subject of a very delicate nature, though of considerable importance in itself, viz. the consideration of the failure of the last harvest, and the best means of preventing the inconveniences that might arise in consequence. His Lordship took a general view of the increased and increasing price of bread, and of most other provisions indispensably necessary to the preservation of human existence; and said, that the information stated in the Report of the other House of Parliament was of so serious a nature, that he had thought it his duty to submit the subject to their Lordships' judgment and wisdom. At the same time he was fully aware, that the very mention and agitation of such a subject might cause some little alarm in the public mind; but that very alarm might be productive of good consequences, by inciting the heads of families to economy, and to use all the means in their power to retrench, and economize in the use of all the articles of life. At present he considered the situation of the country to be similar to that of a ship at sea, the crew of which, as well as the passengers, were, from the unavoidable scarcity of the ship's provisions, obliged to be put on short allowance. His idea, therefore, was, after a due inquiry into the cause of this evil, to find the best and most practicable remedy, and that, he flattered himself, lay within the reach of every housekeeper. The failure of the last harvest was such, that from papers on the table he felt himself warranted to believe that it might have fell short one-fourth of the usual produce of the soil of the kingdom. Taking that as the average, he was induced to imagine, that if every housekeeper would consent to retrench one-fourth of the customary consumption of provisions under his roof, it would meet the scarcity in the most effectual manner; and as it appeared from the authentic official documents upon their Lordships' table, that 700,000 housekeepers had paid to the Assessed and Income Taxes; if the measure of retrenchment, which he had just mentioned, were adopted by them, and strictly observed for three months, it would remedy the evil, considering it as a temporary one, and answer the end, till the kingdom should have received sufficient importation of corn to supply the people of England till the arrival of the next harvest time, which it was to be hoped would be attended with a larger

produce than the last. His Lordship said, the example of their Lordships, and other persons in elevated situations, and possessed of affluent incomes, would doubtless, as in a former instance, have a sensible influence upon the middling and lower classes of housekeepers; and nothing could be more true, than that the inconsiderateness and want of economy of the higher ranks, in the case in question, captivated the less-informed minds of those in humbler situations, and governed to a certain extent their manners and their domestic expenditure. Upon these and other considerations which his Lordship stated, he said, he would conclude with two motions, which he trusted would not meet with objection:

“ 1. That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the causes of the failure of the late harvest; and to endeavour to discover the most effectual means of preventing the inconveniences that may be produced in consequence of the said failure. That all the Lords who have been present in Parliament in the course of this Session be of the said Committee.

“ 2. That a message be sent to the House of Commons, requesting them to lay a copy of their last Report, stating the facts relative to the scarcity of corn, before this House, and also to acquaint them with the proceedings of this House, in appointing a Committee for the purposes before mentioned.”

These resolutions were read, and ordered *nemine dissentiente*.

Lord Holland then rose, and was beginning to speak, when the Lord Chancellor told him the resolutions had passed.

Lord HOLLAND declared that he had not heard the question put, and therefore craved the indulgence of the House while he spoke a few words. His Lordship said, he did not rise to oppose either of the resolutions moved by the noble Lord; but if the country was, as the noble Lord described it to be, in the situation of a ship at sea, the crew and passengers of which were put upon short allowance, he begged leave to ask the friends of those noble Lords who were at the head of the Government, how they could answer for having suffered the country to be placed in so perilous a situation as to bear out the allusion of the noble Lord who moved the resolutions; to both of which he gave his hearty concurrence. If we were in the state of a ship at sea, the crew of which were put upon short allowance, he begged to know from His Majesty's Ministers, why they had been so shamefully negligent of their duty as to endanger the existence of the country, in its first and most essential domestic interests, while they were squandering millions, and shedding the best blood of British subjects in a most expensive and ruinous war? They had not for their excuse that the scarcity

came upon the country of a sudden ; every body knew, or might have known, so long ago as last Autumn, that the harvest had failed ; why then did not Ministers, whose duty it undoubtedly was to take such measures as should serve early to administer the means of relief, that the coming scarcity would obviously require, do their duty ? And if the resolutions moved were deemed necessary now, why had Ministers adjourned the Parliament for so long a period in Winter, when the scarcity was most likely to press with severity on the poor ? The noble Lord himself who made the motions, ought surely to have come forward with them sooner, if he had found a fit opportunity, for we were now in the middle of February, and the poor must have suffered materially from the growing price of bread, and all the articles of life, since the Winter commenced. His Lordship made some farther remarks, and concluded with returning thanks to their Lordships for their indulgence.

Lord AUCKLAND said, he felt some difficulty in rising, from his consciousness that it was extremely irregular to explain or reply to a speech made upon the resolutions he had submitted to their Lordships, and which had received the decision of the House ; but he begged leave to assure the noble Lord, that one reason why he had come forward with any resolution that should call forth the attention and wisdom of the House to the subject of the failure of the last harvest, was, because he had entertained great doubts (which still remained on his mind) whether it was wise or beneficial to agitate such a subject, important as it was, in Parliament, or to come to any Parliamentary regulations respecting it. As to the noble Lord's observation, that he ought himself to have taken up the consideration earlier, he begged the noble Lord to recollect that he had founded the few arguments he had used previous to his making the motions, on papers on their Lordships' table, which had been recently presented to the House.

The LORD CHANCELLOR left the woofack to observe, that the speaking upon the subject of resolutions, which had been distinctly read and regularly passed, was altogether disorderly, and contrary to form ; and it was pretty evident that it was unavoidably productive of farther disorder and irregularity, as his noble friend had felt the necessity of rising to reply, though he expressed his consciousness of the violation of order, of which he was guilty in so doing ; but such ever would be the consequence of a noble Lord's coming in while a noble Lord was on his legs, hearing a part only of his speech, and rising to reply to it, without being

master of the context of his whole argument, from which alone he could fairly form a correct idea of its amount.

Lord HOLLAND said, when he rose before, upon being informed that the House had decided on the resolutions, he had claimed their indulgence, and, upon understanding that they consented, he had ventured to make a few observations upon such parts of the noble Lord's argument, as he had heard; and he appealed to their Lordships whether what he had said did not apply in answer to what had fallen from the noble Lord.

The order of the day being called for, it was read, as was likewise His Majesty's message relative to his negotiations with the Emperor of Germany, the Elector of Bavaria and other German Princes.

Lord GRENVILLE rose and said, he conceived from the uniform votes of the House, on the subject of prosecuting the war with vigour, that it would be an idle waste of the time of their Lordships, were he to enter much into detail on the matter of the message under consideration. While the country felt the necessity of prosecuting the war, it had been generally understood and admitted by Parliament, that it was the truest policy of Great Britain to procure the assistance of the forces of Continental States, by subsidizing their Sovereigns, and upon that received principle it was, that His Majesty had thought it necessary to negotiate with the Emperor of Germany, the Elector of Bavaria, and other German Princes, for a certain number of military forces to be furnished by each for the service of the ensuing campaign. Indeed these treaties were in such forwardness, that although he could not officially state that they were concluded, he could take upon himself to declare to their Lordships, that by that time the principal of them were finally settled, and upon such terms, as upon a comparison with former treaties, were highly advantageous to the country. His Lordship explained, that the sending the treaties over here, and the return of them previous to their receiving a final ratification, unavoidably cost much time; and as it could not be recovered, its loss would be productive of great national disadvantage, and have an injurious effect on the fate of the ensuing campaign; His Majesty's Ministers had therefore thought it their duty to recommend it to him to apply to Parliament, to authorize them to make such advances provisionally to his German allies mentioned, as the conditions of the respective treaties might require. His Lordship said farther, that as soon as the treaties, now under negotiation, were mutually ratified, His Majesty would give his orders, that copies of them should be laid before that and the other House of Parliament. He added,

that he would not trespass longer on their Lordships' patience, but would content himself with moving an address to His Majesty, thanking His Majesty for his gracious communication, and assuring him that the House, conscious of the necessity of prosecuting the war with vigour, would readily concur in the wishes of His Majesty, and give their support to such measures as should be deemed most likely to make good his engagements with his allies.

Lord HOLLAND rose and said, that the noble Secretary of State had attempted to found the present measure upon the former votes of the House, and especially upon the approbation they had lately expressed of the rejection of the overtures of peace from the Chief Consul of the French Republic. No man could certainly lament more deeply than he (Lord Holland) did the resolution to which that House had come on that night; but whatever had induced the House to approve the continuance of the war, surely a conviction of the probability of its success was one of its motives; and how far success was probable, must depend on the means of carrying on the war; and when the means were brought down to that House for their sanction, were they not even to discuss how far those means met their expectations or not? Surely they were; and the more so, because, on the debate upon the address, which the Secretary of State cited as the grounds of this measure, many noble Lords, even of those who had supported that vote, expressly declared, that in so voting on that night they did not conceive themselves as pledged to support all the consequences of the rejection of peace, or even the rejection itself. But would any man say that the measures now proposed, that is, a subsidy to the Emperor of Germany and other German Princes, was what they expected? Did they not collect from the nature of that demand, and from general report, if not from notoriety, that a material alteration had taken place in our prospects? Was it not notorious, and did not this measure confirm it, that the two Imperial Courts acted no longer with concert? When we had the expectation of the aid of the Emperor of Russia, in the most important scene of the war, we had some reason at least to suppose that the principal actor in that scene, if he had not exactly the same views and objects, yet went as far as ourselves. If, indeed, the purport of the present measure was merely to exchange Russian for German mercenaries, so that he not only should have no objection, but he should even think we gained by the exchange. In the first place, in point of consolation, we should gain in knowing that those we employed rendered the horrors of war less heart-breaking, less disgusting than those we expected to employ. We should also gain in point of soldiers; for he was happy to say that

experience had proved that, notwithstanding the marked distinction, the exclusive eulogium with which the Ministers spoke—with which even they made His Majesty speak from the Throne in the commencement of the session; he said he was happy to find that, notwithstanding this, the troops of more enlightened and civilized nations—of Austria, of Prussia, of France, of England, were evidently and greatly their superiors in discipline, in courage, in military skill, and all the qualifications necessary to form a powerful army. He said he was happy to find it so, and he would tell their Lordships why—it was because, however advantageous it might be to the immediate views of Ministers, or, he would even suppose, to the immediate and temporary interests of Great Britain if it were otherwise, yet, for the general good of civilized society in Europe, it was matter of sincere and heartfelt satisfaction to him to find that skill and civilization had so decided a superiority over ignorance and barbarity, that the enlightened nations of the South had not so much to fear as had often been thought from the inroads of those savage and ignorant barbarians of the North. But it was not a mere exchange of troops: we were, indeed, to subsidize and employ German troops instead of Russians: but were German troops ready to contend for the same objects—were they ready to shed their blood in the same cause as the Russians, and ourselves? Was the Secretary of State prepared to assure the House that the views of Austria coincided with his own? Did the Cabinet of Vienna cordially approve of all the principles laid down in his answers to Bonaparte? Did the Emperor of Germany really think, and if he did, where had he declared it, that the speediest and surest means of restoring peace would be the restoration of the Bourbons? He did not know that that Monarch might not rather imagine that the sacrifice of the territories of his fellow hireling, the Elector of Bavaria, to his ambitious projects, would be the speediest and surest means of restoring tranquillity. At the same time, he did not doubt but the statesmen of Vienna had too much wisdom to limit the possibility of peace to the success of their favourite projects. Like our prudent Ministers, they would allow that other events might possibly lead to that desirable end: a slice of Switzerland perhaps; a great portion of Italy, or any other cession of territory, might be among the events, and the Imperial Court of Vienna did not, he would venture to say, *lay claim to prescribe* exactly what territory, and what sacrifices on the part of France would gratify her ambition, and restore the blessings of peace. That she did not consider the restoration of the Bourbons, or even of royalty, as a *sine qua non*, or even as a means of peace, he had at least a right to conjecture; she had never said

so, she had never acted as if she thought so. She had studiously avoided giving any opinion on the subject, but as far as opinion was to be collected from her actions, she seemed to feel no anxiety for that event. She had already made one peace with the Republic, and provided she could make it on terms that seemed to her advantageous and secure, she was, no doubt, ready to make another. With this view of the component parts of the coalition, and when we were called upon to put our trust in this particular part of that coalition, he really solicited the attention of the House. He begged them to pause, not to pause in a state of war before they made peace, but to pause before they entangled themselves in engagements, before they voted away their money, before they pledged themselves to an undertaking so difficult in its accomplishment, so dangerous—he had nearly said ruinous—in its failure: he entreated them to consider what they were about; he entreated them to look upon the present measure as an earnest of the weapons and means to which they had to trust. A few nights ago, upon the motion he had the honour of submitting to the House, he had laid down certain principles which he had contended were considerations upon which every wise statesman decided, before he engaged in any great undertaking. When he enumerated what ought to form their preliminary considerations, the House seemed to acquiesce in the necessity of so doing. Now let them examine the propriety of continuing the war by these rules. He meant by the desirableness of the object, by the effect of success towards the attainment of that object, by the consequences of failure, and by the probability of success. He would first examine in case of success. He would suppose the armies of our allies triumphant every where; in Switzerland, on the frontier towards Italy, on the Rhine, in short, in every quarter of the war; were the Ministers certain that even these triumphs would lead, or even tend to restore royalty in France; or even that the result of such events would be the annihilation of the power and influence of France? Would they still, in case of success, answer for the conduct of Austria? Well, but to make the supposition complete, he would suppose a sincere and real conversion in the Cabinet of Vienna (composed by the bye of the same persons, the same Sovereign, the same Ministers, as at the time of the treaties of Leoben and Campo Formio; of the same men who had negotiated with us for a loan, of which they had never paid the interest, who had formed the most solemn treaties with us for the prosecution of the war, and had then, without any consultation with us, signed a peace), yet he would suppose them, for the sake of argument, reclaimed, and their arms attended with the greatest success. He

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would suppose them in possession of Switzerland, entering on the French territories, fighting in Alsace and Lorraine ; well, let us at least examine, if with such extraordinary and unexpected success and good faith, our point would be gained. He conjured the House to reflect on this, and to dismiss, for one moment, that childish feeling, too prevalent in this country, that foreign States and Princes were moral or immoral, politic or impolitic, in exact proportion to the degree in which they furthered or they thwarted the interests of Great Britain, or even the views of the Ministers of the day. Let the House for one moment reflect that the King of Prussia was not bounden, by any oath of allegiance, to promote our designs, or render his power subservient to British objects ; but that he was bounden by that duty which all Sovereigns owed to their situation, their country, and people, to maintain their independence, to secure the interests of his subjects, and the power and influence of his State : and then he would ask of any man, at all conversant in the interests of continental powers, at all candid or impartial, whether, if he were Minister to His Prussian Majesty, he could, consistently with his duty to his Prince, and his attachment to that country, advise that Prince to sit tamely by and see the hereditary rival of his House, the power most formidable to his own, from its situation, and its general politics, crush and dismember the country of France, which could alone operate as a check to that rival ; which could alone protect him from the effects of that powerful House, directed by antient animosity to the object of annihilating his influence, and destroying his power in Germany and in Europe ? Why then, what would be the consequence even of success attendant on our arms and good faith on the part of our allies ? It would be (unless the Councils of Prussia were suddenly to become at once base and stupid) the immediate interference of that power to rescue France from our designs, and to defeat the accomplishment of that object to which we were sacrificing so much. He would now look to the other side, the more melancholy, though he feared not the more improbable side of the picture—he would suppose us and our allies beaten—he would suppose the armies of Bonaparte triumphant—what had once happened might happen again ; and he would suppose the Austrians, driven by the victorious French, from country to country, defeated, routed, and destroyed in every quarter of the war—What would be the consequence of this ; what would be the resource of Ministers ? He knew enough of their character from past experience, from former conduct, not to know and acknowledge that they would then have recourse to negotiation, to what Mr. Burke happily termed their *mendicant diplomacy*. He

made no doubt that when well beaten and defeated in all their designs, they would then pretend to have had experience of Bonaparte's Government, and then see other possible and speedier means of peace than the restoration of the Bourbons. But he made no doubt that they would be as mean and crouching in their overtures of peace to Bonaparte, as they had been insolent in their answers to his overtures lately; but could they expect, they who had treated him as the most insolent and violent of mankind, that he would be actuated with such equity and moderation as to grant to their supplications, when defeated, that peace which they had refused to him with disdain when they imagined him in adversity? But, was he in adversity? He had heard it maintained with great surprise that the prospect of this campaign was infinitely more encouraging than the last. He would venture to examine what circumstances of improvement had taken place in either; he would ask if the campaign had so reconciled the two Imperial Courts that there was every reason of looking forward to a more cordial co-operation between the two powers than before? It was notorious to the world, that, either from a difference of object, or from disputes originating in the course of last campaign, the Russians and Austrians were not likely to act cordially together; and here he must observe, that, of our two most important allies (Russia and Austria), the Court of Petersburg had two qualities, those of sincerity and extravagance; extravagance in her projects he meant, not in the other sense of the word (that was our lot in the distribution of qualities), but what, if he were not afraid of such a word, he would call absurdity. On the other hand, Austria was very clear-sighted; she had no absurdity whatsoever; she was extremely wise and extremely insincere; we, as the middle term, were formed out of these two Courts, and leaving wisdom to Austria and sincerity to Russia, were contented with being as absurd as the one, and as insincere as the other. He must own, indeed, that we had lately become rather more sincere? that we had lately resembled the magnanimous Court of Petersburg more nearly; but yet we had "limited possibilities," and a thousand other remains of our former want of decision and insincerity. But, to return, did these different views, these jealousies, these variances, augur well of the improvement of our combined armies? On the other hand, was there not every reason to conjecture that the plans, that the armies, that the military conduct of France was likely to be materially improved? At the opening of last campaign, we found them with a disorganized and inferior army, with bad commanders (he meant Scherer in particular), with a corrupt, and ignorant, and incapable Government: and yet, even in the course of that campaign, their

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armies seemed to be in a progress of improvement. The battle of Novi was the best fought; and, at the close of the campaign, they seemed every where to have regained new vigour and spirit. But had nothing happened since that to improve their prospects? Whatever our opinion of Bonaparte's Government, or of his mode of acquiring it may be, will any one say, that in exchanging Rewbell, Barras, &c. &c. for Bonaparte and his staff; that in recalling Carnot; that in possessing the ablest projectors of a campaign, the best and greatest military commanders in the world, the prospect of military success has not improved? In addition to this, they have another great and incalculable advantage, that is, the Secretary of State's irritating and haughty letters, and rejection of peace! Whether it were right or wrong so to reply to that overture was not now the question; but was there a man who doubted that such an answer would have roused many Frenchmen to support with vigour and energy the Government of Bonaparte? Could any man doubt that such an answer must at best have had the effect of reviving the enthusiasm of all Republicans against us? Could any man doubt that many were now willing to employ exertions against the coalition, from which, till the rejection of peace, they would have shrunk? But above all, could *they* who—from the insult the people of England thought, and thought justly, they had received at Lisle—derived for a time the support of the country, who, from the conduct of the French there, derived a *solid system of Finance*, as it was called, and who really were enabled to raise supplies beyond all example in our history—could they of all men in the world doubt the operation of the insolence and haughtiness of an enemy, upon a large, independent, and powerful enemy? He was at a loss to account for the elation of Ministers and their friends. He confessed that it seemed to him little short of madness and infatuation that the prosperous events of last campaign had diminished the danger to which Europe stood exposed. That it had improved our situation, and removed the immediate evils which we then apprehended, was very justly a cause for elation; but that they should think that those events had afforded any hopes of their soon attaining their object, whether it be the restoration of royalty, or the annihilation of the great power of France, did seem to him little short of madness and infatuation. Good God (said Lord Holland)! does not this House recollect that, at the commencement of this dreadful contest, when we were proclaiming Louis XVII. in one part of France, and robbing him of his towns in another, that the same noble Lords and gentlemen that now seem to think the last campaign a strong indication of the probability of ultimate success, talked to the country at

that time of France being in the brink and gulf of bankruptcy, and told them that we were marching to Paris? I will ask the House, if I, or any other man had at that moment been gifted with prophecy, and had stood up and said,—My Lords, from Divine Inspiration I will inform you, that these same noble Lords and gentlemen, will stand up in six years time, in the same places, and state it to your Lordships and their country, as matter of consolation, as ground of serious hope of ultimate success, that France, on whose territory you are now fighting, has been reduced by the most glorious of campaigns to the possession of Flanders, of Holland, of the left bank of the Rhine, of Switzerland, of Savoy, of the alliance of Spain, and the neutrality of Prussia? What would you then have thought would be your situation, to whom such a state of affairs was matter of congratulation and glory, to whom the enormous remains of such acquisitions in the hands of your enemy, were to be quoted as the harvest of your future success? He proceeded to state the inconveniences of subsidies, the little faith that was to be placed in the promises of Courts: he would not again remind the House, that we had subsidized almost every German Prince, and that almost every German Prince had deceived and betrayed us; but he must confess that when he reflected on the amount, the consequences, and the little advantage this country had hitherto derived from subsidies, when he reflected on what, in the Committees of Inquiry upon the failure of the Bank, had been stated to have been the chief causes which led to the event, when he reflected on the sensation which the repeated defection of our subsidized allies had made on the public, and the effect the immense sums exported had had on our credit, he had hoped that a subsidy was one of the few measures to which Parliament would not, without much deliberation and reluctance, consent. For his part, he could not see without regret and alarm, large sums of money go out of the kingdom, which in his apprehension would purchase nothing for ourselves but treachery and disappointment, and perhaps to the House of Austria additional territory and aggrandizement. On the affair of subsidies, it had whimsically been remarked to him, that it would be desirable for this country that these subsidized powers would engage by the job instead of the day, that they would allow us to defer the payment till the work was done, and that they would be paid for the *accomplishment*, not for the undertaking of an enterprize. The idea had struck him as excellent in general, but more particularly in this instance, and he was happy to say that if this system could be adopted upon the present occasion, the Ministers should find him for one a most liberal granter of subsidies; if they would say to the

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Houses of Austria and Bavaria "restore the House of Bourbon, and when you have accomplished the job we will pay,"—he, for one, would promise, on that condition, one million, two millions, three millions, four, five, six millions, any thing they liked—any thing they demanded,—and in so doing he should be satisfied that he was not squandering the public money, and that this conditional engagement would never make the country one penny the poorer, because he was convinced the job could never be done, and therefore the payment could never be called for. But as subsidies were now conducted, he contended the expence and loss were certain, the advantage and profit in this instance more than doubtful, and at any rate depending upon the faith, or rather upon the co-operation of an ally who had before this deserted us; nay, who, when she was bounden by most solemn treaties, and most sacred engagements, had broken them and made a separate peace; and who had not (at least to his or the House's knowledge) entered into any engagement, treaty, or promise which would render such desertion now a dereliction of principle, or a violation of faith. He conjured the House therefore, since they had that night learnt that reliance upon that Cabinet was to be one of their chief hopes of success, to reflect again, and not to engage in an undertaking so desperate in its appearance, in which success itself seemed only to lead to new wars, new expences, and new embarrassments, and in which failure, which seemed but too probable, was little short of disgrace and ruin.

The Duke of MONTROSE said, he by no means intended going through the variety of topics which the noble Lord who spoke last had touched upon, but merely to advert to the single question. This appeared to him to arise out of the proper consideration of His Majesty's Message and Address now moved, viz. Whether, during a war with France, under singular and unprecedented circumstances, it was wise in this country to subsidize the Princes of the Continent, and purchase the aid of auxiliary troops, in order to harass the enemy near their native country; or let them have an opportunity, for want of a politic diversion, to bring the war into the British channel and upon the coasts of this kingdom? The history of England proved, by a variety of precedents, that it had always been the policy of Great Britain, when engaged in foreign war, to avail itself of the assistance of auxiliary troops. If the wisest of our Statesmen, in former periods, and during former wars, uniformly adopted that practice, it surely was the true and best policy of this country to walk in the steps so wisely trod in by their ancestors, and benefit themselves by the help of auxiliary forces.

Lord GRENVILLE said, he did not mean to trespass on their Lordships' patience but for a single moment; he rose merely to observe, that how far it was fit for him, or for any noble Lord to introduce the strain of invective which the noble Lord who objected to the motion had indulged in, that noble Lord could best judge; but he believed the House would agree with him in thinking that it was wholly foreign to parliamentary usage, for any noble Lord in his speech to treat our allies with so much personal disrespect, much more to be guilty of so gross a violation of parliamentary decorum, as to term any Sovereign of a foreign state in alliance with us a *hireling*: personal respect to foreign Sovereigns had hitherto been preserved in that and the other House on all occasions; but it was under a new species of arguments which the noble Lord had himself introduced into that House, that such indecent language had been indulged in. To prevent, however, the possibility of those abroad, who only read the unauthenticated reports of the opposition speeches of noble Lords, collecting from them false ideas, and being led to imagine, that either he or any of His Majesty's Ministers could act so improperly, as to forbear to treat their allies with the fullest respect, or to advise His Majesty to praise one ally at the expence of another, he begged leave to read to the House a copy of His Majesty's speech, the passages of which the noble Lord had alluded to and so grossly misrepresented. The words of the speech were, "the abilities and valour of the commanders and troops of the *combined* Imperial armies had been eminently displayed." On this occasion he had thought it necessary to resort to the original document, as the best conviction of the noble Lord's mistake.

Lord HOLLAND rose again, and declared, that he was ready to acknowledge himself guilty of an incorrectness in the instance just alluded to; but that noble Lord might rest assured he should consult his own judgment solely, as to what he should say, or what line of argument he should pursue in that House. Whatever he felt, he had a right, as a Peer of Parliament, to say, and that he should continue to say without reserve.

The question being put, the House divided—Contents, 28; Not-Contents, 3.

The Not-Contents were, Lord Ponsonby (Earl of Belsborough), Lord Holland, and Lord King.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, February 14.

Mr. BRAGGE brought up an account of the income and expenditure of the Board of Agriculture.

Mr. HOBHOUSE moved, "That there be laid before the House an account of the Debentures and Annuity Bonds issued in the name of his Imperial Majesty, by his agents or bankers, to secure the sum of 1,620,000*l.* lent by the British Government, and the interest accrued thereon since the 16th of May, 1797.

Mr. SAMUEL THORNTON (Governor of the Bank) said, that it was in his power to give an official answer upon that point. Two tin boxes, containing securities for the first loan to the Emperor, had been lodged at the Bank of England: in consequence of the second loan, a parcel, sealed with the Emperor's seal, which had never been broken, had, also, been deposited in the Bank.

Mr. HOBHOUSE replied, that a more extraordinary answer could not have been given. The sum of 1,620,000*l.* was by no means inconsiderable. It was advanced, as a loan, by the British Government, in 1797, to his Imperial Majesty; and yet, at this distance of time, it was not known, whether we had actually any security. Surely there would have been no breach of propriety in examining what the parcel contained. It was only sealed to convey it unopened to the creditor.

The account was ordered.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day for taking His Majesty's message into consideration; which being read, he rose and said, that he stated yesterday the general grounds on which he flattered himself that this message was likely to be received without any opposition. He stated also, that there were 500,000*l.* proposed to be voted on Monday, in a Committee of the whole House to consider of a Supply to be granted to His Majesty, to which His Majesty's message was proposed to be referred. This sum was for the purpose of enabling His Majesty to make such advances as may be necessary in the first instance, and until the whole subject to which the message refers shall come regularly before the House, for the purpose of insuring the benefit and advantage of the co-operation of the powers there mentioned, in the common cause, in the course of the ensuing campaign. He had now only to move, that His Majesty's most gracious message be referred to a Committee of Supply on Monday next.

Mr. TIERNEY wished to be informed, whether the sum of 500,000*l.* intended to be moved in the Committee of Supply, would be sufficient to cover the whole of the subsidies intended to be granted to the Emperor and the Germanic States? He was not to be understood as meaning to infer that he had not serious objections to urge to any subsidy whatever.

Mr. Chancellor PITT replied, that in the present posture of affairs it was wholly impossible to give a decisive answer to the honourable gentleman's question.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. WHITBREAD said, that he wished the consideration of his bill, concerning the poor laws, should be put off to a distant day, and for that reason, he had got his friend (Mr. Tierney), in his absence, to signify his intention of moving, that it should be read a second time on the 28th of April next; this, however, did not seem to meet with the concurrence of the House. He should, however, take the liberty of repeating it—he therefore moved, That the bill for altering and amending so much of an act of the fifth of Elizabeth, as regarded labourers' wages, should be read a second time on Friday the 28th of April next; at which time the different Quarter Sessions throughout the kingdom would have been held.

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG thought there was much danger in keeping a bill of this kind so long on the table as two months. He disapproved also of its principle, which held out advantages to the poor, which he did not believe the poor could ever realize by any of its provisions. He therefore moved an amendment, that the words, "Friday, the 28th of April," should be omitted, and these substituted, "Tuesday, the 25th of February."

Mr. ELLISON disapproved of the principle of the bill, and thought it no remedy for the evils it was intended to cure. Should it ever come to operate, the consequences would be, that none but the best labourers would be employed, and those who were of an indifferent class would be totally neglected. Labourers, he thought, ought to be paid according to their desert; but it might happen, that some could not even merit the *minimum* of wages which the honourable gentleman's bill held forth; in which case nothing was left for them but starvation. He thought, therefore, that this bill was calculated only to increase, and not to relieve the distresses of the poor.

Lord SHEFFIELD thought there was no reason for agitating the present question at this time, and that it was only calculated to raise discontent in this country. The best way to relieve the distresses of the poor was to persevere in those measures which might

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remedy the present scarcity. Something very strong was necessary to be done. No regulation of the poor laws would make individuals of that class perform their relative duties. An instance occurred when he was in the country, of two men, brought before him, who asserted, that all their earnings belonged to themselves, and that they were not obliged to give their families any part of them. Their families, therefore, became burthensome to the parish. As the bill was not capable of removing such evils, he thought it an inadequate one, holding out to the poor the idea that they did not meet with sufficient encouragement from their employers. He therefore wished the bill might be disposed of.

Mr. SHAW LE FEVRE said, that since the first time this subject was agitated, in the year 1795, he had been hostile to any farther regulation of the poor laws, because he thought it unnecessary. To administer well the laws now existing, was quite sufficient for every humane and ameliorating purpose.

Mr. WHITBREAD was sorry the debate had taken so disorderly a turn. When he first introduced this bill, it was his intention to have proposed an early reading, but he was then told that it was highly improper. It lay therefore two months on the table, and was dispersed widely through the country. He had received several letters approving the principle of it, and only one petition appeared in its disfavour. It was extraordinary, therefore, when a distant day was proposed for the second reading of a similar bill, that it should be thus objected to. It was said, that the bill was calculated to create alarm in the country: but the experiment had been tried; a former bill of the same kind was not attended with any such effect. By an observation that an honourable gentleman opposite had made, he was led to suppose that the bill had never been read by him. It was not intended to raise the wages of the poor, as was intimated by him, but to fix the *minimum* of labour. A noble Lord had mentioned an anecdote of two men: they were notoriously bad; but in every class of society such would exist: neither did he consider it as any argument at all against the bill. Did the noble Lord think that, on the passing of this bill, every labourer in the kingdom would abandon his family? An honourable Baronet over the way had said that the act of Elizabeth had never been acted upon; but he (Mr. Whitbread) thought this observation arose from a little confusion of ideas. The regulation of the price of labour had been frequently enforced. Mr. Whitbread said, by bringing in this bill he had no intention of raising a spirit of disaffection in the country; and even if he could for a moment entertain such an idea, he thought the present proceeding ill calcu-

lated for the purpose. On a former occasion, when 1500 copies of a similar bill were dispersed through the country, no alarm, no disturbance had taken place, although it was at a time when the poor were particularly necessitous. It was of consequence, he thought, that this bill should be read at every Quarter Sessions in the kingdom; and he moved therefore that its second reading should be deferred to the day proposed.

Lord SHEFFIELD explained.

Mr. WINDHAM objected to the distant reading of the bill, on the ground of the delay raising a spirit of disaffection in the people. The bill had been fully weighed and considered; there was no occasion, therefore, for its being delayed in its progress a second time for a point already attained. As to the bill itself, he thought it was calculated to produce no very salutary effect. The poor themselves would be against it. He wished therefore the bill should be brought in at a short period, that no hazardous experiment might be tried on the country.

Mr. WHITBREAD, in reply, said, the experiment should be tried whether the country would approve of the bill. He wished for no other experiment. If the honourable gentleman who spoke last had read the bill, he would have been more candid in his observations.

Mr. BUXTON remembered the unfavourable opinion entertained by the country at large on a former similar bill; and he must, partly on that ground, but more from his own conviction, object to the present one. It would operate, he thought, as a *maximum* instead of a *minimum*. Farmers would be willing to give no more than the compulsory wages. To let the bill be dispersed through the country at this time was, in his opinion, extremely impolitic. He thought, however, that something ought to be done in favour of the poor.

The House then voted for the amendment of Sir W. Young.

Mr. BRAGGE brought up the report of the Committee on the Expiring Laws Bill.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, February 17.

Earl STANHOPE having taken his oaths and his seat, gave notice that he should on Thursday next bring forward a motion respecting the war. He also moved that the Lords be summoned for that day.—Ordered.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, February 17.

The Expiring Laws Bill was read a third time and passed.

A message from the Lords informed the House, that their Lordships had under their consideration the great scarcity of corn under which the country now laboured, and the best measures that might contribute to the relief of that scarcity; and as they understood that the House of Commons had gone into an investigation of the same subject, their Lordships requested that that House would communicate to their Lordships a copy of the Report which had been brought in by the Committee of the House of Commons.

On the motion of Mr. Chancellor Pitt, the messengers were called in, and

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted them, that the House would communicate to their Lordships a copy of the Report mentioned in their Lordships' message.

Mr. Long presented, among a variety of Accounts, that which had been moved for by Mr. Hobhouse on a former day, viz. an account of the securities issued by the Emperor of Germany, for the loan advanced to him in 1797. On the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the paper was read to the House, and it appeared that no securities had been sent by his Imperial Majesty.

Mr. Chancellor PITT did not think it necessary to trouble the House at any length with observations on this paper. The loan advanced to his Imperial Majesty in 1795 had already been the subject of an inquiry. He had therefore only to refer gentlemen to the Journals for the statements which were then made. With respect to the loan, now the subject under consideration, he had no hesitation to acknowledge that the Court of Vienna did decline ratifying the Convention that was to be entered into on that subject; but the reasons which induced his Imperial Majesty to refuse that ratification had since been removed, and recent intelligence enabled him to have the satisfaction of informing the House that the Convention had actually been ratified. But as this intelligence arrived but very lately, the House would not be surprised that an answer had not sooner been given to the questions put to him upon that subject.

Mr. HOBHOUSE reminded the House, that, in the commencement of the session of 1797, he had moved the House for an

account of the debentures, sent by the Emperor of Germany, for securing the loan from this country of 4,600,000*l.* in the year 1795. In consequence of that motion, a paper had been laid upon the table, stating, that two tin-boxes had arrived from Germany, containing mortgaged actions on the Bank of Vienna, to an amount in the proportion of four to three of the money which had been borrowed, conformably to the articles of the Convention between his Imperial Majesty and the King of Great Britain. So far then he had received an answer: but as another debt of 1,600,000*l.* to the British Government had been contracted by his Imperial Majesty, he thought it his duty to inquire whether the stipulations had been fulfilled. By the paper now presented to the House, it appeared that his Imperial Majesty had not complied with the terms of his own agreement, as specified in the Convention between the two Courts made in the year 1797. How there could be any misunderstanding, he was at a loss to comprehend. The language in the Convention clearly and unambiguously described the sum advanced as a loan. But it seemed that the Emperor had very recently ratified the Convention. Mr. Hobhouse said, that he believed he could account for that circumstance. His Imperial Majesty, who had thus long disregarded his most solemn engagement, had been prevailed upon to carry it into effect by the promise of a large subsidy. He was ready to acknowledge that he stood indebted to this country in the sum of 1,600,000*l.* on the condition that 2,500,000*l.* should be given to him for the purpose of carrying on the war against France.

Mr. TIERNEY wished to know if it was in the contemplation of His Majesty's Ministers to furnish the Emperor with any farther loan, should his Imperial Majesty call for it; and if so, what were the measures taken to secure a punctual payment of the interest?

Mr. Chancellor PITT professed himself unable to say at the present moment what assistance it might hereafter be necessary to afford to his Imperial Majesty; that was a point which would be settled in the course of the negotiations now carrying on. He was ready, however, now to state, that it could not well be expected that the Emperor should be required to pay the interest on such loans during the continuance of the war: for if we continued to avail ourselves of the co-operation of the Court of Vienna, for which co-operation we were to give a pecuniary consideration, would it not be a circuitous road to payment to be taking from the Emperor with one hand while we were giving him with the other. The solemn manner in which the Convention had now been rati-

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fied was, in his mind, a sufficient pledge of the good faith of his Imperial Majesty, and could leave no room for apprehensions respecting his future punctuality.

Mr. TIERNEY observed, that the interest had already accumulated to a large sum, and wished to know what was the security for the interest now due?

Mr. Chancellor PITT replied, that as yet no arrangements had been settled respecting that point.

Mr. HOBHOUSE asked, whether the Emperor of Germany had annually invested in our funds the sum of 60,000*l.* for the purpose of gradually redeeming the loan of 1795, conformably to an article in the Convention; but Mr. Pitt declined to give an answer at that time.

One of the Sheriffs of London appeared at the bar with a petition from the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council, praying for a pecuniary aid towards widening and improving the entrance into the city by Temple-bar.

The petition was referred to a Committee.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt moved the order of the day for referring His Majesty's message to a Committee of the whole House, to consider of a supply to be granted to His Majesty. The order being read, the House resolved itself into a Committee accordingly; when that part of the King's message which refers to a provisional supply being read,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, "The motion which I shall submit to the Committee this day, proceeds upon a principle which has been often and has recently been recognized in this House, that we are to proceed in a vigorous prosecution of the war; a measure which we in common feel to be necessary for the safety, honour, and happiness of this country. Those who were of opinion that His Majesty's Government acted wisely in declining negotiation at this period with the enemy, will not be backward in consenting to continue, or, if necessary, to augment the force that may be deemed proper to be used in the common cause, such as was employed last year, or may be employed this, and which affords the best prospect of success on the frontier of France. This gives, even to France, an opportunity of relieving itself from a galling yoke and obtaining a happy repose, and to its neighbours a hope of permanent tranquillity. It affords a prospect of delivering the remainder of the Continent (for much of it was delivered during the last campaign) from the horror of a system which once threatened even more than all Europe with total destruction; a deliverance, however, which will never be completed while there remains a vestige of the power of

Jacobinism; for while it exists in any thing like strength, it must always endanger the repose of Europe. Those, therefore, I say, who were of opinion that His Majesty's Ministers acted wisely in declining to negotiate with the enemy at this moment, will not be unwilling to assent to the motion with which I shall have the honour of concluding. But I should hope that even those who recommended negotiation, and who, I believe, recommended it without much confidence of ultimate success if it were attempted, will acquiesce in the measure that I, in the discharge of my duty, am going to propose. The majority of this House, and the great majority of the people of this country, will, I am confident, agree, that if the war is to be carried on at all, it should be carried on upon that scale which is most likely to bring it to an honourable, if possible a speedy, but, at all events, a secure, conclusion. After what I have seen of the brilliant achievements last year, it is not for me to say how much is to be expected from the exertions of the Imperial arms; this is not for me to argue—it rests upon a much better foundation than any argument can be. I am aware, that there is, fresh in the minds of those who are most anxious for the honour of the common cause, a supposition that there may not be the same co-operation of both the Imperial Courts, or that the same force will not be employed against France in the present year, or the ensuing campaign, as there was the last campaign. I take this opportunity of stating, that there is reason to believe the Emperor of Russia will not employ his arms to the same extent, if to any extent, against France, in conjunction with Austria. I stated this on a former night. I stated also, that there was no reason to believe that his Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Russia, will withdraw from the most cordial co-operation with this country, or cease to shew his resolution not to acquiesce with France, whilst it pursues a system, such as it does now, that endangers the tranquillity of Europe and all its establishments. But if there were any grounds of apprehension that his Imperial Majesty would withdraw all co-operation, I should then take the liberty of stating that as an additional reason for the measure which His Majesty has taken, and which was communicated to us by his gracious message, part of which the Committee has just heard read; and the Committee will learn with satisfaction that the force from the power of Germany will be greater in the ensuing campaign than it was in the last, great and brilliant as its victories were: I should therefore expect the concurrence of this Committee to any measure which was likely to further so very desirable an object. If the general object, therefore, be likely to meet the concurrence of the House, as by recent discussion the

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House has already declared and pledged itself it should, I might now proceed to my motion ; but there are some other points upon which it is perhaps expected that I should touch briefly. At this period of the year, and from circumstances which I need not enumerate, we cannot have the treaties ready to be laid before Parliament, therefore the House cannot judge ultimately on the scheme, part only of which is now laid before it ; but I say there is already enough before us to make it incumbent on Parliament, at this crisis, to enable His Majesty to make advances such as may prevent the enemy from having any advantage by postponing the efforts of the allies beyond an early period, or of preventing the campaign from being opened with that vigour which the friends of the common cause against the common enemy could wish : the great object of the present measure is to give spirit to the campaign at its commencement, and afterwards due strength for its continuance on the part of the allies. These are the two principles on which His Majesty's Message is founded ; and the motion with which I shall have the honour of concluding, is to give His Majesty's intention effect. I am not aware of any objections that are likely to be made to this measure. If I should hear any, I shall endeavour to give them an answer. There is only one point more to which I beg leave to allude, and which was hinted at on a former day : I have stated, that from the circumstances of the Continent, the negotiations between us and our allies are not fully concluded ; it is therefore impossible for me to state the whole force to be employed, or the total amount of the pecuniary assistance which this country is to afford to his Imperial Majesty. I have already said, it is proposed in the mean time that 500,000*l.* should be advanced by way of commencement. At the same time, I am aware that gentlemen would naturally expect I should state some general heads of what we have in view by the measure now about to be submitted to the Committee. The object of it is to secure the co-operation of such a force as His Majesty's Ministers have reason to believe is likely to be superior to any force the French can bring to the frontier. The total amount of the advance upon this subject will probably be two millions and a half ; for the whole force to be employed against France is considerably larger than it was last year. The sum which is now proposed to be voted is only 500,000*l.* I shall therefore move, " That it is the opinion of this Committee, that a sum not exceeding 500,000*l.* be granted to His Majesty, to enable His Majesty to make such advances as may be necessary for the purpose of insuring, at an early period, a vigo-

rous co operation of the Emperor of Germany, the Elector of Bavaria, &c. in the ensuing campaign against the common enemy, &c."

Mr. NICHOLLS said, that he wished some facts to be ascertained before he could agree to the adoption of this measure. The state of the poor in this country was really alarming. He wished, in the first place, before agreeing to send such a sum of money out of the kingdom, that it should be ascertained what quantity of corn would be necessary for the supply of the wants of this country. He considered that the last crop had been deficient a full fourth in the usual produce of the country, or at least in its usual consumption. This would leave above two millions of quarters of wheat to be purchased to supply the deficiency. He, secondly, wished to ascertain whether this quantity of corn could be procured from the ports of the Baltic. He wished, thirdly, to know what would be the expence in money at which this grain could be purchased. He himself thought that 12,000,000*l.* was not over-rating the expence. Now he hoped that the Committee would pause before they consented at once to adopt a measure which might either interfere with the interest and prevent the relief of the poor of this country, or, if prosecuted, at the same time affect its commercial credit. He hoped they would inquire, whether we were able to pay away two millions and a half in subsidies to foreign powers, and at the same time pay twelve millions for the supply of the necessaries of life, without endangering our prosperity and trade? He thought that the subject ought to be adjourned for farther consideration. He had no specific motion to propose; but there appeared to him to be the utmost necessity for caution and deliberation. Gentlemen were most zealous for the continuance of the war; but he was sure that they would not wish it to be continued by any measures that would increase the distress of the poor, or affect the public credit. Already the scarcity of corn is severely felt, and before next harvest the evil would be much augmented from more causes than the want of corn. The failure of the turnip crop, and the already extravagant price of hay, threatened as great a rise in some of the other necessaries of life as in that of bread. He repeated, that he hoped gentlemen would pause before they sanctioned a measure which might increase the evil, or, at least, lessen the means of remedying it.

Mr. JOLLIFFE spoke in support of the proposition. He thought that no war could ever be carried on so advantageously as by foreign troops. Gentlemen had a right, he said, to speak their opinions; but this right did not extend to the justification of attempts (which they themselves knew to be vain) to oppose the plans of Government, and to impede it in the execution of its measures,

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especially when the object of these plans and measures was sanctioned by a great majority of that House a few evenings before.

The Honourable WILLIAM BOUVERIE said, that the overture for negotiation, to the discussion upon which the last speaker had alluded, had in his opinion been treated arrogantly and insolently; it ought to have been listened to. He could not foresee in what manner the negotiation might have terminated, or whether peace would really have been the result; but had negotiation been tried, and had it appeared that every measure had been taken to secure an honourable peace, then if it had failed, he was convinced that there was scarcely a man in the country who would not have considered the prosecution of the war as a common cause, and who would not have coincided with cheerfulness in every exertion for its success. Then he would have thought the present proposition worthy of support, and the measure which depends upon it beneficial. He considered it, however, as ridiculous to assert, that any scarcity of corn can exist in this country to make the nation hesitate as to the prosecution of a great national object. Indeed, in the present case, he was convinced that there was plenty of corn in the country to supply its inhabitants till next harvest. It had just been stated, that gentlemen should not oppose measures for the prosecution of the war, when the House had lately agreed by so great a majority to carry it on. But surely it was the prerogative of every Member to speak his sentiments on every proposal that was brought before the House, and he was answerable for the vote which he gave upon it to his constituents, and not only to them, but, without incurring the charge of superstition, to another tribunal. He concluded by adverting to the argument which had been adduced against entering into negotiation, from the tendency of peace to confirm the power of Bonaparte. This, he said, would not be our object in making peace; but, if it was an effect of it, it might be relied, we would no farther confirm the power of Bonaparte than it was our interest to do.

Mr. TIERNEY. "The opinion which an honourable gentleman has expressed, that those who oppose the majority, and the measures which they propose, act an unbecoming part, challenges from me in the first place a few remarks. Though those who oppose the majority are but few, they have a right to be supposed to be actuated by upright motives. Their not coinciding in the opinions of others, is surely no ground for suspecting their principles to be corrupt, and the smallness of their number is not sufficient to prove that they are always in the wrong. It will be recollected, gentlemen cannot so soon have forgotten, that the right honourable gentleman acknow-

ledged, that on a former occasion he had negotiated in conformity to the wishes of the people, and in consequence of their opinion being plainly expressed in favour of negotiation. But was it by the majority of this House that this opinion was expressed, or was it not the few who had expressed that opinion, and who were found to express the sentiments of the people? I am convinced that even now the wish of the whole people is for peace, and that the minority of this House have expressed the wish which the people feel. It is said that gentlemen have committed themselves, by voting for the prosecution of the war, to vote for the supplies necessary to carry it on. But surely a change of circumstances may produce a change of opinion, and gentlemen who voted for prosecuting the war, while they were confidently told that the differences between the two Imperial Courts were at an end, and that the Emperor of Russia would send into the field an army still superior to that which he sent last campaign, may now think that a change has taken place sufficient to authorise their change of opinion, when they hear what amounts to an official avowal of the defection of the Emperor of Russia. I know it will be said, that that power has not deserted from the object of the war; that her troops are only to be withdrawn from active operation on the Continent of Europe, and that she still retains all her desire of promoting the real object of the war. But did this power ever really furnish a man without being paid for him? Or will the Emperor of Russia now co-operate with us at all, except on the old terms, that we shall pay his troops, feed them, clothe them, and send them home again when we have done with them, each with a bounty money in his pocket, under the name of two months additional pay? But let us inquire how far there can be real co-operation between us and the Emperor of Germany. His object, which he has avowed to all Europe, is totally distinct from any view to the restoration of the House of Bourbon and of the French Monarchy. Has he ever expressed a wish for such an event? Has he not, on the contrary, by his whole conduct, proved, that it is his only object to increase his power, to make territorial acquisitions, and to recover the countries which he has lost? Had the right honourable gentleman come down to the House this day, and informed gentlemen that the Emperor of Germany had got over his difficulties, and had now avowed a common cause with this country and Russia, there would have been some plausibility in his requesting the House to accede to the plan of granting him a subsidy; there would have been some prospect that the object for which such a subsidy would be granted might be attained. But the case is different; we are asked to subsidize

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a power which is at war indeed against the same nation with whom we are at war, but who is at war for a very different object. I believe that the object of Ministers is really the restoration of Monarchy in France, notwithstanding the *ifs* and *buts*, and the diplomatic special pleading, which they have always introduced when this subject is brought under consideration. But if they would lay aside these ambiguous expressions, and saving clauses, and openly avow themselves, I am convinced that this would be found to be their real object. Now, for the promotion of such an object, I never will consent to vote one shilling of the public money. I may wish the restoration of some better order in France, but the circumstances of this country may be such that I cannot be authorised to vote one farthing to promote it. An honourable gentleman has been blamed for introducing the state of the corn upon this subject, as extraneous and inapplicable; but in my opinion, if there is one subject more connected than another with this discussion, it is this. It surely is not unnecessary or improper to inquire if it is expedient to think of sending money from this country to supply the wants of others, while we have so great a necessity to turn all our resources, and all our means to the supply of our own. The honourable gentleman estimated that there was a deficiency of provisions for three months, before we could be supplied by the produce of next harvest. He also calculated the quantity of corn which would be necessary to remedy this deficiency, and the money at which it could be purchased. He may not be quite accurate, but surely there are in the allowed circumstances of the country something to make us hesitate upon a proposition of sending money out of the country, when these very circumstances will at all events require a large supply for our internal, and more immediate national purposes. The war has now continued seven years. During the greater part of that time it has been defended on the principles that it was just and necessary, and 200,000,000*l.* have been expended in defence of these words. Of late, however, we have heard nothing of the justice and necessity of the war, and the words *just* and *necessary* have died a natural death. Indeed now the war can neither be said to be just nor necessary. It is not just, because its object is to restore Monarchy in France; it is not necessary, because we have refused to negotiate when an opportunity was in our power. The principle of the present proposition now demands from me a few words of observation. This principle I can only state shortly to be this: You have voted for the continuance and prosecution of the war, and if you act consistently, you will vote for this subsidy of 500,000*l.* being granted. But it will not end here; having once

voted this sum, you will be asked to vote much larger subsidies, and it will be said to you, you have acknowledged the propriety of the plan, you have recognized its expediency, and will you now draw back, and depart from the principle which you have allowed, by your conduct, to be right? The voting then of the present sum, is not the only evil which gentlemen have to apprehend from allowing themselves to be influenced by the motives by which the present proposition is enforced. I cannot believe that any of this 500,000*l.* is intended for the Emperor. He will not conform to the views of the right honourable gentleman, and would not, I dare say, accept a subsidy on the principle of conforming to them, nor would the right honourable gentleman offer it to him so long as his views were undisguised. But is not the war as much the business of the Emperor of Germany, and of the States of the empire, as of this country? I shall be told, perhaps, that they have abundance of zeal, but little money. I recollect that this was the statement at the beginning of the war; and when subsidies were then granted by this country to the Emperor and the Germanic States, similar arguments were used. Then the Emperor got four or five millions. But at a subsequent period, when he got no supplies from this country, did it appear that his resources were smaller, or his exertions less energetic? Has he not shewn that he possesses not only abundance of men, but the means of calling them into action and supporting them in the field? In the last glorious campaign, as it has been called, was he strengthened by any subsidy from this country, or were not the whole of his successes the result of his own force and of his own resources? How then can it now be argued, or how can it be stated, with any degree of plausibility, that without a subsidy from us he will be unable to call the men into the field whom he has it in his power to employ? The sum at present proposed to be voted, is, indeed, small, but the principle upon which it is asked, will lead to a great deal more. I cannot, for my own part, feel myself warranted to vote away money for an object which I do not understand; for I do not understand for what object the war is now prosecuted. Negotiation has been refused, and were this refusal sanctioned by any reasons which could justify it to my mind, however much I might and would always lament the shedding of blood, if blood was to be shed, I would approve of the present measure, because I would rather with any blood to be shed than British blood; and would, in order to save the blood of my country, willingly subsidize and pay others to shed their's in its cause. But if Ministers had negotiated sincerely, when the overtures for negotiation were made to them, it is at least a possible case, that we might have

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had a secure, an honourable, and a lasting peace; and if even this chance, I will call it, has been wantonly renounced, then I say that I cannot be warranted in voting, either that the money or the blood of this country should be wasted in a contest to which I see no end, and for a purpose totally undefined. Is it the destruction of the Jacobin principles, that is the object which Ministers have in view? Let us suppose that this is the object; do they intend to fight against it till they extinguish its last embers? What is the Jacobin spirit? Let them define it, that we may know against what we fight. But it is something indescribable; a phantom which is only now known by the designation which has been given it. They must know that Jacobinism is now in France much diminished in its power and influence. The late events which have taken place in that country have almost annihilated it, or at least they have deprived it of all that ever rendered it attractive. The principles of Jacobinism, so much dreaded, and so much deprecated, it must be allowed always tended to some species of liberty, to vesting the power in the hands of the people—[Here there was a loud cry of "*Hear!*" from the ministerial side of the House.]—This liberty is now totally abolished, and with it Jacobinism must expire. But if the same measures are pursued which gave it birth and energy, it may yet regain its power, and, though dead, may revive. But in truth I do not think that this can be the real object of the war. This object must either be something secret, hidden in the minds of Ministers, which they are afraid, or do not care to publish, or rather something undefined and undefinable, which they themselves have not ascertained, which they cannot explain, and of which the nature is not known. It is not the destruction of Jacobin principles; it may be the restoration of the House of Bourbon; but I would wish the right honourable gentleman in one sentence to state, if he can, without his *ifs* and *buts*, and special pleading ambiguity, what this object is. I am persuaded he cannot; and that he calls us to prosecute a war, and to lavish our treasure and blood in its support, when no one plain satisfactory and intelligible reason can be given for its continuance."

Mr. Chancellor PITT.—"The observation with which the honourable gentleman concluded his speech, appears to me one of the strangest I ever heard advanced, and first challenges my attention. He defies me to state, in one sentence, what is the object of the war. I know not whether I can do it in one sentence; but in one word, I can tell him that it is Security. But it is also more than this: it is Security against a danger, the greatest that ever threatened the world. It is Security against a danger which

never existed in any past period of society. It is Security against a danger which in degree and extent was never equalled; against a danger which threatened all the nations of the earth; against a danger which has been resisted by all the nations of Europe, and resisted by none with so much success as by this nation; because, by none has it been resisted so uniformly, and with so much energy; because our resistance has not been confined to external force, but to internal regulations of policy; and to these wise legislative measures which opposed its progress and influence in the bosom of the country (when gentlemen on the other side of the House were valiant in Jacobinism), as much as to our heroic exertions in the field, to the brilliant successes of our arms, and the glorious victories of our navy, has this success been owing. How or where did the honourable gentleman discover that the Jacobinism of Robespierre, of Barrere, the Jacobinism of the Triumvirate, the Jacobinism of the Five Directors, which he acknowledged to be real, has all vanished and disappeared, because it has all been centered and condensed into one man who was reared and nursed in its bosom, whose celebrity was gained under its auspices, who was at once the child and the champion of all its atrocities and horrors? Our security in negotiation is to be this Bonaparte, who is now the sole organ of all that was formerly dangerous and pestiferous in the Revolution. Jacobinism is allowed formerly to have existed, because the power was divided. Now it is single, and it no longer lives. This discovery is new, and I know not how it has been made. The honourable gentleman asks if we are to carry on the war till this Jacobin principle is wholly exterminated, is totally extinct.—Extinct! No, Sir; were we to carry on the war till such a period should arrive, I am afraid that we should carry it on till the present generation has entirely past away. But we must carry it on till we have some security against its dangers, till we have some experience, some evidence that it has lost part of its terrors, and part of its powers. At present we have no guaranty, no ground of security against the fear of Jacobin principles; and while this fear remains, the honourable gentleman will find it difficult to lull the country again into that fatal security which, in the origin of the contest, too nearly proved our ruin. Say two hundred millions have been spent; as the honourable gentleman expresses himself, for the words Just and Necessary—it has been spent for the best of causes, to save the dearest Rights, to defend the most valuable Privileges, to protect the Constitution, the Laws, the Liberties, the Independence, the Security, and the Happiness of our Country; and, for such objects, as much more would we spend,

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and as much more would we find, I am convinced, were it necessary. It is said, that the object of the Emperor of Germany is defined to be one thing, and the object of the Emperor of Russia another. The Emperor of Russia has clearly stated his object to be that sole one of restoring Monarchy in France. In this he differs from the object which we have in view. The Emperor of Germany is said to be actuated principally by the desire of making territorial acquisitions. We may have a third object. But why may there not be a difference of opinion as to the precise point for which the war is carried on? May not private gentlemen in this country differ in their ideas as to the point where security is to be obtained; and may not the Belligerent powers differ also in their ideas as to the best means of procuring security to themselves and to Europe? If gentlemen could really bring themselves to believe, that the Emperor of Germany saw no dangers springing from the French Revolution, that he apprehended none of the mischiefs of Jacobinism, that he was unconcerned as to its progress, and indifferent as to its effects, could they really believe that he, some of whose States had experienced so many calamities from ravages, yet cared not for its repression and extinction? Ought not his offer of co-operation to be gladly accepted by us who fear and fight against them all, could he be persuaded by any motives to bring a great army to fight against the power of France, which is the source from which they flow? The honourable gentleman may tell me, that his object is territorial acquisition, regaining States which he had lost, and even adding more to what he originally possessed: I would rejoice in this collateral security for his fidelity to the common cause, and would rejoice that I had this farther pledge that he would continue to co-operate with us in destroying the cause of our alarms, in restoring to us the hope of national security. If Austria really has no fear of the dangers of Jacobinism, so far from her desire of territorial acquisition being an objection to co-operation with her, it would afford the best ground of security to us in this co-operation. The honourable gentleman took another ground of argument, to which I shall now follow him. He said, that the war could not be just, because it was carried on for the restoration of the House of Bourbon; and, secondly, that it could not be necessary, because we had refused to negotiate for peace when an opportunity for negotiation was offered us. As to the first proposition, that it cannot be just, because it is carried on for the restoration of the House of Bourbon, he has assumed the foundation of the argument, and has left no ground for controverting it, or for explanation, because he says that any attempt at explanation upon this

subject is the mere ambiguous unintelligible language of *ifs* and *buts*, and of special pleading. Now, Sir, I never had much liking to special pleading; and if ever I had any, it is now almost entirely gone. He has besides so abridged me of the use of particles, that though I am not particularly attached to the sound of an *if* or a *but*, I would be much obliged to the honourable gentleman if he would give me some others to supply their places. Is this, however, a light matter, that it should be treated in so light a manner? The restoration of the French Monarchy, I will still tell the honourable gentleman, I consider as a most desirable object, because I think that it would afford the strongest and best security to this country and to Europe. *But* this object may not be attainable; and *if* it be not attainable, we must be satisfied with the best security which we can find independent of it. Peace is most desirable to this country; *but* negotiation may be attended with greater evils than could be counterbalanced by any benefits which would result from it. And *if* this be found to be the case; *if* it afford no prospect of security; *if* it threaten all the evils which we have been struggling to avert; *if* the prosecution of the war afford the prospect of attaining complete security; and *if* it may be prosecuted with increasing commerce, with increasing means, and with increasing prosperity, except what may result from the visitations of the seasons; then I say, that it is prudent in us not to negotiate at the present moment. These are my *buts* and my *ifs*. This is my plea, and on no other do I wish to be tried, by God and my Country. I ask the honourable gentleman, whether he thinks that England or France have most exhausted their means of carrying on the war, and which of them, great as the expence of the ensuing campaign may be to this country, he thinks will be most exhausted at the end of the year 1800? I would ask the Committee, whether, at the end of that time, it is not probable that we shall have greater security should we then begin to negotiate? We may be weakened, but will not the enemy be proportionably more weakened, as her present resources are less numerous and extensive than ours? and if the present Rulers should remain in power, shall we not have some farther grounds to judge of the trust to be reposed in their principles as well as confidence in their stability? But all this discussion is merely an attempt to connect the war with the present scarcity in this country, and to mislead the people by making them believe that the evils of the latter which they feel, are entirely the result of the former. It is an attempt to make them reason, little qualified as they are at all times for reasoning upon a subject on which their passions are interested, and upon which they are consequently less

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able to judge with impartiality. The honourable gentleman adverted to another point upon which I must yet add a few words. He complained that there was an attempt to interrupt the fair procedure of the parliamentary debates, because something was said about the propriety of every gentleman agreeing to the present proposition, as the continuance of the war had been already agreed to by a great majority of the House. In what I have said, I am sure that my language was directly contrary to sanctioning any such procedure. I said, that those gentlemen who had voted for the continuance of the war, and, perhaps, even many of those who opposed, would sanction the present proposition; and then I added the reasons which, in my opinion, would induce them to do so; first, because the war is by your own consent to be prosecuted; and, secondly, because this is the best method for carrying it on. For this latter proposition I also stated arguments; so that the appeal which I made, was merely to the understandings of those who heard me. I went, indeed, farther; and if I presumed too far, it must be allowed that it was from an excess of candour. I said, that perhaps some gentlemen opposite me might think, that since the war was to be continued, and since they could not prevent its prosecution, it would be as well that the supplies necessary for its being prosecuted with success should be granted, and that they would rather see this country victorious than our enemies; and I never will believe that they wish to palsy our army, to paralyze our strength, to diminish our glory, or to plunge us in misfortune, except they themselves tell me so. The honourable gentleman says, that though his friends are few, they have represented the opinions of the country on a former occasion, and that they now represent it in their expressed desire of peace. If he meant this in the full sense of his expressions, it is another proof that Jacobinism is not yet overthrown; for it is one of its most favourite principles, that the few who compose the sect represent the opinion of the many. I recollect an expression of an honourable gentleman, who now seldom favours us with his presence, when speaking of himself and his friends, "the Few who express the voice of the People," which is nearly the same with the language of the honourable gentleman this night. But I must require a little more evidence than either of them ever produced, to prove that they speak, or ever have spoken, the voice of the country. On the occasion alluded to, when Government thought it expedient to make an attempt at negotiation, I deny that the voice of the majority of the country was for peace: but many entertained a hope that there was some chance of security in negotiation, and wished the attempt to be

made. Government coincided with them in opinion; but very few now regretted, from what has since occurred in France, and from every part of her conduct, that the attempt did fail; and I am confident, that the majority of the country is not now represented by those gentlemen who are eager for negotiation, and who wish for peace without security and without stability. I am no enemy to peace; but I must think that the danger of patching up a peace without any probable ground of permanency, is greater even than that of carrying on a war. With respect to the negotiation at Lisle, I believed at that moment that the prosecution of the war was fraught with more danger to the country than the establishment of peace, if peace could have been concluded on such terms as were then proposed to the enemy. It was the result of a comparison between the farther prosecution of the war, and the then existing state of the country; a state different from that in which, I am happy to say, the country finds itself at this moment. I am free, Sir, to say, that the prevalence of Jacobinical principles in France do not at present allow me to hope for a secure peace. As I declared upon a former occasion, without that attempt to obtain peace, we could not have made those subsequent exertions which have proved so successful. But because of our present increased means for carrying on war, I ask the honourable gentleman, is it fair in him to argue that I was insincere in labouring for peace at a time when the circumstances of the country dictated the expedience of attempting it? I confess, Sir, from the arguments I have heard this night adduced, I do not think that the specific measure under consideration is so much the object opposed, as the general one of the farther prosecution of the war. With respect, Sir, to the operations of the war in reference to Russia and this country, I would ask, whether a Russian force, although acting in a different direction than before, may not push on a successful war? And whether the means of France to make a successful opposition to the armies which may be opposed to them, may not be weakened by the appearance of a large maritime force?—When, or in what direction, it is not for me to say; nor, indeed, is it material, in point of argument, to state to what points such a moveable maritime force may be directed. If, in fact, there be a greater addition to the opposition against France by a maritime diversion, through the co-operation of Russia, than from any diminution sustained by withdrawing the troops of Russia from the frontiers of Switzerland; and if to this addition we have likewise the prospect of a Continental force acting against France, superior to any armies which, from the most probable conjecture, she is able to bring

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forward, the projected arrangements we have every reason to expect will prove beneficial to the common cause, and eventually promote the object we all have in view. With respect to the expences of purchasing corn and provision for the troops which may be thus employed, I must consider what an honourable gentleman has asserted on this head as an exaggerated statement. He has argued, that twelve millions will be wanted for the purchase of corn, &c. from the Continent; but even this is inconsistent with what he at the same time stated, that there was a scarcity on the Continent. But his object evidently was to impress upon this House, and the country, the idea of the impossibility of this country carrying on the war. I said, Sir, this was an exaggerated statement of expences; and I have the farther satisfaction of informing the House, that a considerable supply of corn has already been obtained from the Continent, and that more is still expected. Add to this, that we have resources of a pecuniary nature equal to both the requirements of men and provisions. As to the general rate of exchange which has been noticed, I must observe, that nothing of that kind affecting the commerce of the country should be allowed to weigh in the scale against the obtaining a proper supply of food, or the vigorous prosecution of hostilities against the enemy. The honourable gentleman, in assuming that the war is unjust and unnecessary, has argued upon a false principle. It is not true that the war has occasioned the scarcity; nor is it true that a supply of corn could be more easily obtained in peace. If the war be unjust, it should be stopped altogether; if just, it should be prosecuted, even though the scarcity be greater. It might with equal consistency be contended, that in a town besieged, the garrison, though not vigorously pressed by the enemy, should surrender sooner than be reduced to short allowance. But, Sir, I feel it my duty to observe, that if the majority of this House is determined to continue the war, that man does not act like a good citizen who wishes to render the issue of it injurious to his country, and favourable to France. In arguing the question, he is undoubtedly justified in using every fair means to convince the House of his opinion; but he ought on no account to exert himself to make the contest less successful. I think it incumbent upon him whilst arguing against the prosecution of the war, only to use such arguments as do not militate against all wars whatsoever. I trust that he will feel it to be acting contrary to his duty, if by his arguments he merely endeavours to weaken those exertions which the country are bound to pursue. There is nothing more dangerous, more cruel, more mischievous, than to attempt in this manner to connect the establishment of war and the scarcity of

corn, with the view of aggravating the evils of both, and misleading the public mind. I should not have said so much upon this point, if I had not seen principles adopted and attempted to be disseminated out of this House, which I trust will never be admitted within these walls."

Mr. TIERNEY spoke in explanation. He said, he had felt some impatience to claim the attention of the House, because he should not maintain the character of a good Member of the State—nay, he deserved to be expelled society—if those sentiments and that conduct were his, which the right honourable gentleman had imputed to him. That gentleman, in his irritation, had gone into a strain of argument which his sober judgment ought to have prevented. He had indulged in a strain of invective through the greater part of his speech, and censured particularly any argument connecting the war with the state of the country. But it was impossible to argue that point without going into the very thing objected to. No person could be more anxious than himself to see the people contented; but he must repeat, when called on for a subsidy to an Emperor of Germany, that it was distressing to behold the people of England in want. He agreed with the right honourable gentleman, and he had already so expressed himself, that the people were prepared to undergo many privations, rather than compromise the honour of their country? But the question was not, whether the people of England should defend themselves (for on this point there was but one opinion), but whether they should contribute to aggrandize the Emperor of Germany? If the enemy were at the gate, then indeed it were improper to say a single word; but the question was, whether the House should agree to the Report of the Committee of Supply, and agree to send two millions and a half of English money to the Continent?—Mr. Tierney again reverted to the negotiation at Lisle; and from the representation of that transaction, declared he was not disposed to retract any part of the language he held in this affair. Ministers had sacrificed the opinions of the majority of the people of the country to the sentiments of the few. He thought it strange that the right honourable gentleman should suppose his arguments had proceeded from a spirit of Jacobinism lurking within him, and which had afresh broken out that evening. He should be glad to know of the right honourable gentleman, whether at any time, directly or indirectly, he had proved himself an advocate for Jacobinical principles? If there was a man in this country who had reprobated the enormities that had taken place in France, it was himself. But the right honourable gentleman and his friends

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shewed themselves to be much mistaken when they talked about Jacobinical principles. To him it appeared that they, in fact, promoted the continuance of such principles in France, whilst the re-establishment of Royalty was their main object, whilst Security was the watch word. The present question was not, whether assistance should be afforded to the Emperors of Russia and Germany, even though they had a different object from us, but whether this country should pay for it? For his part, he did not believe that this country was able to pay for it; but, supposing it was, how did it know that this money might not be employed, not to annoy France, but to injure other people? and he might ask, as a case in point, what had become of the unfortunate King of Sardinia? What he had to state was, that the purpose for which the two millions and a half was proposed to be voted might be applied to purposes as disgraceful as those for which money was formerly granted. Let those powers pursue their specific views and enterprises; but let them not do it with British money; more especially since, during the two last years, they had discovered no want of resources of any kind. Adverting to the present state of France, Mr. Tierney argued, that the last Revolution met with general concurrence, and promised stability, inasmuch as he was informed that landed property there fetched a higher price than before. The right honourable gentleman had boasted of the beneficial effects resulting from the breaking off the negotiation at Lisle; but it could not be inferred from this that negotiation was not now necessary. Here Mr. Tierney quoted the language of the House of Commons in their address to His Majesty upon that occasion, and argued, that the same language which was then held respecting France, could not consistently be maintained now; nor did he suppose that the right honourable gentleman could better the situation of the country, by acting on contrary grounds to those which he had formerly taken. He did not apprehend that either the trade or resources of the country were so inexhaustible as the right honourable gentleman supposed. It was a strange supposition, as if this country was proceeding in a career which increased her wealth in the same proportion as she diminished that of the enemy. The war might increase the wealth of individuals; but the House was not met to promote the aggrandizement of such persons. The burdens occasioned by the war were most generally and severely felt. It pressed peculiarly hard on country gentlemen. If the property of the country had not diminished, it had to a degree at least changed hands; and was the shifting of property no calamity? Was the

distressing the vital strength of the country, the gentry of England, no evil? And were the estates of these gentlemen, whose ancestors had placed the present family on the throne, to go from them, in order to reinstate the family of Bourbon on the throne of France? Were these the effects resulting from the right honourable gentleman's boasted system of finance? And did he expect that the country gentlemen were to fall down and worship him, whilst their distresses were so severely felt, and whilst the chief merit which he could justly claim, was that he had hitherto prevented these distresses from breaking out in open murmurs or insurrections. Who, he would ask, were the persons chargeable with harassing the Minister? Not Opposition. As a proof of this, read the Journals of the House, of twenty-seven millions of money voted, one hundred and ten thousand seamen, &c. without one dissenting voice; and yet the right honourable gentleman now argued, that when he or those with whom he had the honour of acting, opposed the granting of foreign subsidies, all that they aimed at was to stir up the minds of the people of the country! He believed no other Minister would have ventured to make such a charge. Mr. Tierney said, that, for his part, he was satisfied that we might have peace; and on this ground he should vote against granting a supply for carrying on the war. Peace was the wish also of the people of France. With a view to bring it about, they had concurred in the establishment of their new Government. The best security this country could desire, was that which arose from the united wishes and interest of Bonaparte and the people of France. The Minister, by rejecting the offer to treat, was, in his opinion, the best friend that Bonaparte had, and concurred to establish his throne on the firmest ground, excepting that of making peace; for what besides this could establish his power more than Ministers refusing even to hear what Bonaparte had to say? Mr. Tierney said, he was glad to find a passage in one of the intercepted letters which had been published, that Bonaparte was not bigotted to the keeping of Egypt. So then, had a negotiation been entered into, it appeared that one of the great objects of contention would have been removed. The conduct of Bonaparte was directly the reverse of that which had been charged upon him, being the leader and mover of Jacobinical principles; so, at least, he should continue to think till he was satisfied that peace could not have been made with him. For the reasons he had stated, he should not consent to give a vote for such supplies as this which was now proposed.

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Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that he felt himself reluctantly called up. He would confine himself to the main question, which was, being at war, whether we should conduct it with vigour, or not? and whether that vigorous resistance could not be more effectually made by foreign troops, subsidized in the service of this country, than by British troops? He was, indeed, surprised how any gentleman who had voted for the war should take any exception to this mode, which, in his opinion, was most economical and most conducive to a speedy conclusion. He was not so inexperienced in Parliament as not to know how subject Members were to misrepresentation, and to misstatement. Under such circumstances, he was called upon by his duty as a Member of Parliament to justify himself. Did he, or his right honourable friend, at any time deny that the pressure of the war would be severe? Certainly not. He regretted it was necessary, because that security which would be expected was not to be obtained. He said, that it was misrepresentation for Members to state that the war was now to be prolonged and carried on for the restoration of the House of Bourbon. This certainly was misstatement, as no word could be wrested or strained in fairness to such a purpose. The war must be carried on for reasons of just and weighty considerations. The Government of France was such as no man could calculate with any degree of certainty on it; subject to continual shocks, from the ambition of its present Ruler. The most ambitious Monarch that ever filled the Throne must give infinitely more grounds for security than its present Usurper. Bonaparte was connected with the Jacobins, who hitherto distracted France; they influenced of course its Councils, and rendered all intercourse extremely dangerous. The old system of Jacobinism prevailed; and who could tell but at the very time of negotiation, a powerful force might be brought against this country? This is a solid objection to entering on a premature or hasty negotiation with the present Government of France. We should not then be told, that the object of the war was to place the House of Bourbon on the Throne. But he had to remark at present, what for many years he had noticed, that when his right honourable friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had ever expressed his opinion with the guard and caution which prudent men should use, and qualified it in such a manner as to leave him free still to act as emergencies or circumstances should in the event dictate, he had ever remarked a tendency to impute to his right honourable friend a meaning which could not be justified. To those who know any thing of life, that circumspection is highly necessary; and he was assured, that those who acted with that frankness, candour, and cau-

tion, had more real principle than those who followed up their passions, who made broad assertions, and who scrupled not to contradict, at one time, what they boldly asserted at another. He thought, that on raising the supply, the general quantum of the grant for war might have been discussed and decided; but when gentlemen admitted the supply as necessary to carry on the war, the particular sums should certainly be granted, unless more economical or more effectual means could be pointed out in the Committee. But the opposition being made to the vote of this night, was an opposition made to the principle of the war, on purpose to impede the powers of Administration, and force them into a disadvantageous negotiation. When France was in such a state as she was on former occasions, when there was any appearance of security in her Councils, then, and not till then, he should be ready and willing to treat for peace.

Mr. SHERIDAN—"The honourable gentleman who has just sat down, and said he rose only to save himself from misinterpretation, has declared, that he has no objection to peace. Now I should expect a warmer declaration from that honourable gentleman, when I recollect his conduct on a former occasion. I recollect a time, when he came to rebuke the violence of the Minister. [Mr. Sheridan read a motion made by Mr. Wilberforce, for an address to His Majesty, praying, that the Government of France might not be made an obstacle to peace, when an opportunity should arrive.] Now, as the honourable gentleman is anxious to escape from the charge of inconsistency, I should expect he would state the reason for this difference in his conduct now. Then the Government was a provisional Government; a Government from its nature not intended to stand; a Government of furious Jacobins; and yet the honourable gentleman implored to supplicate His Majesty, that it might not be suffered to stand in the way of peace; but now, when it is of a less objectionable description, he justifies his friend from an arrogant, violent, inconsiderate, and I hope he will not find an unfortunate note, refusing to accept peace from such a Government. An honourable gentleman who has spoken in the debate put a very just question, whether the country will endure to be governed by words, and not by facts? I admit it right that it should not be so governed, but I unfortunately have the authority of the present Government that it is. The honourable gentleman spoke with great eloquence, I may say irritation; but never did I see eloquence so misapplied. He has shewn his dexterity in driving the subject from its proper basis; he guides, urges and inflames the passions of his hearers on Jacobinical principles; but he

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does not shew how they bear on the present question. He has not dared to say that, so far as respects the restoration of the House of Bourbon, we have suffered by the defection of Russia. What that power may still do with regard to La Vendée, or reconciling the people of Ireland to the Union, I do not inquire; but with regard to the great object, the restoration of Monarchy in France, we are *minus* the Emperor of Russia; that power may be considered as extinct. Is it then to be endured, that the Minister shall come down and ask for a subsidy under such circumstances? Is it to be endured, that we shall be told we are at war for the restoration of Monarchy in France, that Russia is pledged to the accomplishment of that purpose, that Russia is the rock on which we stand, that the magnanimous Emperor of Russia, the gallantry of whose troops, and the skill of whose great Generals, place them above all the troops and Generals in Europe, is all we have to rest on? Is it to be endured, I say, that this rock should prove as brittle as sand, and that those who held this language should come down in a week after, and say, give us two millions and a half to subsidize Germany and then we shall have a better army than we had with Russia? After such unqualified praise upon Russia, and after her defection, is not such language, I ask, inconsistent, absurd, and preposterous? If Germany possessed these wonderful forces before, why were they not called into action; and if not, why are we to subsidize the *passé comitatus*, the rabble of Germany? But who is the person that applies for this subsidy? As to the Elector of Bavaria, I leave him out of the question. It is the Emperor of Germany. Is there any thing in his conduct and character to incline us to listen to him. I think not; and for these two reasons: first, he applied once on a false pretence; and, secondly, he failed in performing his stipulated engagement. What was his false pretence? He said he could not open the campaign without the pecuniary assistance of this country; and yet he did do so, and displayed more vigour, energy, and resources than ever. Now, if to this we add experience, and the evidence of facts, when he dared, though bound to this country, to break faith with her, and make a separate peace, does it not furnish a reasonable cause for declining to grant a subsidy to such a power? The honourable gentleman is offended at our connecting the situation of the country and the present scarcity with the question of war. I do not know to what extent this principle is to be carried. I see no more objection to state the pressure in this particular from the continuance of the war, than there would be to advance the increase of the public debt, the situation of the finances, or any other of those reasons so often repeated, without its

having been ever objected that they were of an improper kind. Sir, I say, there is no more impropriety in urging this argument, than in urging Ministers not to press the people too far, but to apportion the burden to their strength to bear it. What has my honourable friend said? We see an opulent commercial prosperity; but look over the country, and we behold barracks and broth-houses, the cause and the effect, the poverty and distress of the country; for surely it will not be contended, but that among the calamities of war are to be reckoned families left without support, and thrown upon charity for subsistence. That the war is unnecessary, as being useless, is self-evident, and nobody can deny it. But, say they, Bonaparte has taken us at an ungarded moment: we do not object to peace, but we have a fear and jealousy of concluding one, except with the House of Bourbon: in a peace concluded with it we should have confidence, but we can have none in the present Government of France. I say, were that event arrived, and the House of Bourbon seated on the Throne, the Minister should be impeached who would disband a single soldier; and that it would be equally criminal to make peace under a new King as under a Republican Government, unless her heart and mind were friendly to it. France, as a Republic, may be a bad neighbour; but than Monarchical France a more foul and treacherous neighbour never was. Is it, then, sufficient to say, let Monarchy be restored, and let peace be given to all Europe? I come now, Sir, to the object of the war as expressed in the note. It is there stated, that the restoration of Monarchy is the *sine qua non* of present negotiation; and then it proceeds to say, that it is possible we may hereafter treat with some other form of government, after it shall be tried by experience and the evidence of facts. What length of time this trial may require, is impossible to ascertain; yet we have, I acknowledge, something of experience here by which we may form a kind of conjecture. At the time of the negotiation at Lisle, the then Republican Government had stood two years and a half. Previous to that time, it had been declared improper to enter into negotiation with it; but, from experience and the evidence of facts, Ministers discovered that it was then become good and proper to treat with; and yet so it happened, that, immediately after this judgment in its favour, it crumbled to pieces. Here then we have a tolerable rule to judge by, and may presume, on the authority of this case, that something more than two years and a half must expire before any new government will be pronounced stable. The note, Sir, then proceeds to pay an handsome compliment to the line of Princes who maintained peace at home, and to round the period handsomely,

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it should have added, tranquillity abroad ; but instead of this are substituted respect and consideration, by which we are to understand exactly what is meant by the consideration with which the note is subscribed, being equivalent to " I am, Sir, with the highest respect and sincerest enmity, yours,"—for, Sir, this consideration which the line of Princes maintained, consisted in involving all the powers within their reach and influence in war and contentions. The note then proceeds to state, that this restoration of Monarchy would secure to France the uninterrupted possession of her antient territory ; by which we are to understand, I suppose, we would renounce our Quiberon expeditions. In this note, Sir, the gentlemen seem to have clubbed their talents, one found grammar, another logic, and a third some other ingredient ; but is it not strange, that they should all forget that the House of Bourbon, instead of maintaining peace and tranquillity in Europe, was always the disturber of both ? In the very last transaction of Monarchical France, I mean her conduct in the American war, His Majesty's speech begins thus :—" France, the disturber of the tranquillity of Europe."—But were a person to judge hereafter, from the history of the present time, of the war we carried on, and the millions we expended for the Monarchy of France, he would be led to conclude that it was our nearest and dearest friend. Is there any thing then in the knowledge of human nature, from which we can infer, that with the restoration of Monarchy in France, a total change in the principles of the people would take place ? or that the Ministers of the new King would renounce them ? What security have we, that a change of principles will take place in the restored Monarch, and that he will not act upon the principles cherished by his ancestors ? But if this security is effected by maiming France, does the right honourable gentleman think that the people of France would submit to it ? Does he not know that even the emigrants have that partiality for the grandeur of their country, that even they cannot restrain their joy at Republican victories ? But with regard to the practicability of the course to be pursued, the right honourable gentleman says, he is looking forward to a time when there shall be no dread of Jacobin principles. I ask whether he does not think, from the fraud, oppression, tyranny and cruelty with which the conduct of France has marked them, that they are not now nearly dead, extinct, and detested ? But who are the Jacobins ? Is there a man in this country who has at any time opposed Ministers, who has resisted the waste of public money and the prostitution of honours, that has not been branded with the name ? The Whig Club are Jacobins (*a dead silence*). Of this there can be no

doubt, for a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Windham) on that account struck his name off the list. The Friends of the People are Jacobins—[*A cry of "Hear! Hear!"*].—I am one of the Friends of the People, and consequently am a Jacobin. The honourable gentleman pledged himself never to treat with Jacobin France until we had

Toto certatum est corpore regni.

Now he did treat with France at Lisle and Paris, but perhaps there were not Jacobins in France at either of these times. You then, the Friends of the People, are the Jacobins. I do think, Sir, Jacobin principles never existed much in this country; and even admitting they had, I say they have been found so hostile to true liberty, that in proportion as we love it, (and whatever may be said, I must still consider liberty an inestimable blessing), we must hate and detest these principles. But more, I do not think they even exist in France; they have there died the best of deaths; a death I am more pleased to see than if it had been effected by a foreign force; they have stung themselves to death, and died by their own poison. But the honourable gentleman, arguing from experience of human nature, tells us that Jacobin principles are such, that the mind that is once infected with them, no quarantine, no cure can cleanse. Now if this be the case, and that there are, according to Mr. Burke's statement, 80,000 incorrigible Jacobins in England, we are in a melancholy situation; the right honourable gentleman must continue the war while one of the present generation remains, and consequently we cannot for that period expect those rights to be restored to us, to the suspension and restrictions of which the honourable gentleman attributes the suppression of these principles. A pretty consolation this truly! Now I contend, that they do not exist in France to the same extent as before, or nearly. If this, then, be the case, what danger can be apprehended? But if this, then, be true, and that Bonaparte, the child and champion of Jacobin principles, as he is called, be resolved to uphold them, upon what ground does the honourable gentleman presume to hope for the restoration of the House of Bourbon? So far I have argued on the probability of the object; but the honourable gentleman goes on, and says, there is no wish to restore the Monarchy without the consent of the people. Now if this be the case, is it not better to leave the people to themselves; for if armies are to interfere, how can we ascertain that it is a legitimate Government established with the pure consent of the people? As to Bonaparte, whose character has been represented as marked with fraud and insincerity, has he not made treaties with the

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Emperor and observed them? Is it not his interest to make peace with us? Do you not think he feels it? And can you suppose, that if peace were made, he has not power to make it be observed by the people of France? And do not you think that the people of France are aware that an infraction of that peace would bring with it a new order of things, and a renewal of those calamities from which they are now desirous to escape? But, Sir, on the character of Bonaparte I have better evidence than the intercepted letters. I appeal to Carnot, whether the instructions given with respect to the conduct to be observed to the Emperor, were not moderate, open, and magnanimous?—[Here Mr. Sheridan read an extract from Carnot's pamphlet, in support of his assertion.]—With regard to the late note, in answer to his proposal to negotiate, it is foolish, insulting and undignified. It is evidence to me, that the honourable gentlemen themselves do not believe his character to be such as they describe it; for, if they did, they must know their language would irritate such a mind; the passions will mix themselves with reason in the conduct of men, and they cannot say that they will not yet be obliged to treat with Bonaparte. I am warranted in saying this, for I do believe in my heart, that since the defection of Russia, Ministers have been repenting of their answer; I say so, because I do not consider them so obstinate and headstrong as to persevere with as much ardour for the restoration of Monarchy as when they were pledged with Russia. There was not a nation in Europe which Ministers did not endeavour to draw into the war. On what was such conduct founded, but on Jacobinical principles? Indeed Ministers, by negotiating at one time with a Jacobinical Government in France, plainly proved they were not so hostile to its principles as they would now wish to appear. Prussia and Austria, as well as this country, have acted also on Jacobinical principles. The conduct of this country towards Ireland has been perfectly Jacobinical. How, then, can we define these principles, when persons who would not disavow them fall by some fatality into an unavoidable acknowledgment of them? The objections that have been raised to peace have been entirely Jacobinical. If we seek for peace, it must be done in the spirit of peace. We are not to make it a question, who was the first aggressor, or endeavour to throw the blame that may attach to us on our enemy. Such circumstances should be consigned to oblivion, as tending to no one useful purpose. France, in the beginning of the Revolution, had conceived many romantic notions; she was to put an end to war, and produce, by a pure form of Government, a perfectibility of mind which before had never been realized. The Monarchs of

Europe, seeing the prevalence of these new principles, trembled for their Thrones. France, also, perceiving the hostility of Kings to her projects, supposed she could not be a Republic without the overthrow of Thrones. Such has been the regular progress of cause and effect; but who was the first aggressor, with whom the jealousy first arose, need not now be a matter of discussion. Both the Republic, and the Monarchs who opposed her, acted on the same principles: the latter said they must exterminate Jacobins, and the former that they must destroy Monarchs. From this source have all the calamities of Europe flowed; and it is now a waste of time and argument to inquire farther into the subject. Now, Sir, let us come to matter of fact; has not France renounced and reprobated those Jacobin principles, which created her so many enemies? Are not all her violent invectives against regular Governments come into disesteem? Has not the Abbe Sieyes, who wrote in favour of Monarchy, has not Bonaparte condemned the Jacobinical excesses of the Revolution in the most pointed manner; the very men who have had so large a share in the formation of the present Government? But I maintain that Bonaparte himself is also a friend to peace. There is in his correspondence with the Ministers of this country a total renunciation of Jacobinical principles. In the dread, therefore, of these, I can see no argument for the continuance of war. A man who is surprised at the revolution of sentiment in individuals or nations shews but little experience. Such instances occur every day. Neither would a wise man always attach to principles the most serious consequences. Left to themselves, the absurd and dangerous would soon disappear; and wisdom establish herself only the more secure on their ruins. I am a friend to peace at this time, because I think Bonaparte would be as good a friend and neighbour to this country as ever were any of the Bourbons. I think also that there can be no time when we can hope to have better terms. If the King of Prussia should join France, such an alliance would greatly change the state of things; and from her long and honourable neutrality, in spite of the remonstrance and entreaties of this country, an event of that kind is by no means unlikely to happen. It must be considered also, that the First Consul of France must feel no little portion of resentment towards this country, arising from the indignity with which his overtures of negotiation have been treated; it is not improbable that, to satisfy his revenge, he would make large sacrifices to the House of Austria, that he might contend more successfully against this country. Such are my fears and opinions; but I am unhappily in the habit of being numbered with the minority, and therefore their

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consequences are considerably diminished. But there have been occasions when the sentiments of the minority of this House have been those of the people at large: one, for instance, when a war was prevented with Russia concerning Oczakow. The minority told the Minister, that the sentiments of the country were contrary to those of the majority: and the fact justified them in the assertion; the dispute was abandoned. In the year 1797, the opinions of the minority on peace were those of the people, and I believe the same coincidence exists now upon the same subject."

Mr. NICHOLLS said, he wished to answer the accusation brought against him by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He reminded the Committee that he had begun with expressing his wish that the question might be adjourned till certain facts could be ascertained, and that for that purpose witnesses might be called to the bar. He had himself stated no fact, but had only remarked the conclusions which necessarily followed from the facts stated by the evidence before the corn Committee. It was stated before that Committee, that there was a deficiency of corn for three months: it was also stated, that, one with another, those who consumed wheaten bread, consumed a quarter of wheat in a year. If, therefore, the population of England amounted to eight millions, we should want two millions of quarters. If any alarm was given by this notification, it had been already given by the report of the corn Committee.

Mr. WINDHAM said, the opinions of the House, and the opinions of the gentlemen opposite, had long been in direct opposition. The House wished that an end might be put to the calamities which had afflicted Europe, arising from revolutionary principles. Gentlemen opposite seemed to wish that those principles, which are called the rights of man, may be invigorated and flourish. The House wishes either the restoration of Monarchy to France, or some government not tinged with revolutionary principles. Gentlemen on the other side wish for a Republic such as we now see exist. The House wishes for a Government in France that may be a pledge to this country of a safe and honourable peace. Gentlemen, in conformity to their principles, wish the present coalition of powers may be broken, or that their united endeavours may not succeed. They have pleaded the necessity for a negotiation, without considering that it affords very little prospect of leading to peace; while at the same time we know that it would have the certain effect of countenancing and consolidating the power of Bonaparte: it would also produce jealousy among the coalesced powers, and might ultimately tend to break the present existing

confederacy. Seeing then all those immediate dangers to which the coalition is exposed by a negotiation, it requires but little sagacity to conclude for what reason it was at first set on foot; it was an instrument to answer the political purposes of Bonaparte. If a man were to ask what would open an oyster? he would answer, a knife of a certain thickness and dimensions: so if a man were to ask what would break up a coalition? he would answer, a negotiation; it is the apple of discord, meant to disunite only, and not to produce pacification. But the object of this country should be to counteract the schemes of our enemy, and this can only be done by guarding, with the most scrupulous care, against every thing which may weaken the great military confederacy now happily renewed against France. Two years and a half ago, when Bonaparte was at the gates of Vienna, what was the conduct of gentlemen opposite? When France appeared to be in her exultation, did they wish to depress her? Their conduct was quite the reverse—they opposed the giving of supplies, and were willing to leave France to turn all her force against Austria. The language of gentlemen is, if you continue the war, we will try to cripple you in all your efforts, and to render them ineffectual. If gentlemen acted impartially and fairly, they would examine whether there was not some important end to be answered worthy all the trouble and expence which Ministers would wish to bestow on its attainment. If such an end existed, it would then be the height of absurdity to refuse the means of accomplishing it. But on this subject we have heard very little said. “As for the reasons alledged for not granting the supply required, I am glad to observe that they seem to make very little impression on the House. If gentlemen can shew that the money is not likely to produce an effect adequate to the expenditure, or that it can be laid out in some other way more to the advantage of this country, Ministers will be much obliged to them. But gentlemen opposite do not appear to be decided in their plans;—sometimes they would put an entire stop to the war—and sometimes would only obstruct it. Some would go great lengths to carry on the war, but object to the extensive lengths to which others are led, and therefore endeavour to paralyse the efforts which they want the spirit to approve. Another contradiction is seen also. They are attached to the Republic of France while a Republic exists, and to individual despotism when fresh circumstances have created that change. Can feelings of the rights of man approve of such revolutions? That the House in general should differ from them, can be a matter of no surprise. Gentlemen accuse Ministers of having no determinate object in the war. Sometimes they say it

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is the restoration of Monarchy; sometimes the surrender of Belgium has been a *fine qua non* of peace: but the explanation of the grounds of the war, and its continuance, have been so often repeated, that it is folly to dwell any longer upon them; it must be intelligible to all mankind. If we cannot gain all we wish by the war, we must obtain all we can. Where the best thing is unattainable, the second best must be had. After what my right honourable friend has said on this part of the subject, I will not pursue it farther. From the beginning to the present period of the war, there has been no variation in the grounds of its continuance. The same language has been uniformly used by those concerned in its prosecution. Since I have been connected with the Ministry, by no expression of mine could it be supposed that I in the least differed from them. The endeavours, therefore, that gentlemen have made to fix on my conduct the character of change and indecision, are altogether unjust. I am not ashamed of my sentiments, and have always avowed them openly; this has sometimes procured me the praise of noble candour; and at others, the slur of indiscretion; but I am as little inclined to take the praise, as to admit the slur. There is one question which gentlemen have asked that deserves a definitive answer—"Will you, they say, fight for the restoration of that Monarchy in France, which was always hostile to this country, and has been the occasion of our wars and debt?" This, Sir, is a matter of calculation. The Monarchy of France existed eight hundred years; and if we consider the evils it occasioned us in that time, *pondere non numero*, we shall find them far inferior to those accumulated upon us by the unprovoked aggressions, the plots and the arts of France, in the short course of her eight years Revolution. What is found most execrable in the history of the worst times, has been the every-day practice of France. Leaving the idea for a moment, of treating with that country as it now exists, let us suppose a Bourbon on the Throne; might not better terms of peace be expected from him than from the present Chief Consul? Would not peace with him be more permanent? The very condition in which a Prince just reinstated in his Throne would feel himself, would be a security for the limitation of his views, and the permanency of his engagements; neither, with a disposition to be hostile, could he act with the same force as a Republic. For some time also he must, in a great measure, be dependant for security on neighbouring nations. In course of years, however, this same Monarchy, I own, might degenerate in principle, as it increased in power, and be even as hostile to us as the previous Government. It would, however, possess the character of stability, and capacity to respect

treaties, while the present Government of France carries in its bosom the seeds of its own dissolution, and of disturbing other states. Gentlemen contend that the character of Bonaparte should not come into consideration. They deprecate any discussion of this kind, and think it fraught with the worst of consequences. Time and occasion, Sir, do not invite me to say much on this subject; I will only observe, that what has been said of Bonaparte did not arise from any peevish satisfaction in weighing his character in the disadvantageous scale, but from the real necessity of the case. Before we treat with any one, we must consider their character and conduct; nothing could be more reasonable; how else shall we be able to rely on their sincerity? Bonaparte has been held out as an hero: this one would suppose was no recommendation in the eyes of those who are always declaiming against Kings and Conquerors, and war and bloodshed. Yet even this hero, armed with the power of a King, can be contemplated without fear, and even with pleasure; while Kings in general are branded with being lovers of war and the murderers of mankind. Such are the prejudices that gentlemen are willing to entertain, because two thousand years ago a King and a Conqueror were synonymous terms; yet the union of these characters in Bonaparte becomes only a venal failing, and he is still to be endured; as a King, he is no longer despotic; as a Conqueror, it seems, he is not the plunderer of mankind. Tried in a Court of Chivalry, indeed, his actions might dazzle; but they would not even there bear a scrutiny. Let us now come to the sincerity of Bonaparte in wishing to make a general peace. His love of peace will be seen in that with Austria, which was made on his part chiefly with a view of carrying war into another quarter of the world. He was in hopes, by having the command of the army of England, of subjugating this country to the authority of France. In the intercepted letters from Egypt also we have several specimens of his sincerity: yet, for the sake of suffering humanity, we are called upon to make peace with this man. Peace at all events, without considering what kind, is the cry. Just like the man who turned his dirty shirt, and exclaimed: Oh the comforts of clean linen! It has been often asked, what is Jacobinism?—I say, we know it but by its effects; it breaks up the institutions of every country where it takes root; its explosions are like those of a volcano, sudden and destructive, and it has almost brought ruin on Europe. At the same time, I own, there is some difficulty in defining it: it can easily transfer its regard from one Government to another; at one time universal representation is the true art of governing in its estimation, and at another it is quite overlooked and forgotten.

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This puts me in mind of a conversation which I had lately with a friend at Norwich, whom I knew to be tainted. "Brissot (says he) was a fine fellow!" "If he was so (said I), what was he who cut off Brissot's head?" "He was a fine fellow too," answered this weak person. Just so with some gentlemen in this House. In the French Revolution, the last murderer is always the hero, and his sentiments and conduct the most estimable for a time; for this reason it is that there is such difficulty in describing Jacobinism: it is a kind of quality that may as well be presented to the mind as Chaos itself: it is the very negative of all order. A Jacobin Government is a Revolutionary Government; it is founded on the ruin of every thing permanent and dear to man: it robs the owner of his property to give it to the worthless, and despoils the people of their dearest rights and privileges. We are not to suppose that the danger of Jacobinism is over, because it lies dormant, or because liberty is destroyed. If the latter circumstance could have precluded danger, all attachment for Jacobinism must have ceased from the beginning; for that and Liberty have never been found to exist one moment together. Yet there are even now persons in this country who wish well to the Government at present in France, and who would feel its establishment as the triumph of their sentiments and opinions. Such are the persons who justify the rights of man on every occasion. The progress of these principles is by them deemed no evil, but meets with their warmest support. Those that wish for peace with Bonaparte, wish it with more than natural ardour, and blame, therefore, with proportionate intemperance, every measure adopted with a contrary view; and this arises solely from their regard for the present upstart French Monarchy. The interest of this country is not to implicate itself with the French Government, for by so doing every proceeding which has disgraced France would meet with our tacit justification; and men who think it would be a great calamity to see the rightful Sovereign of France resume his throne and authority, and the owners their estates, would not long scruple, if opportunity offered, to render the same resumption necessary in this country. The temporary scarcity of provisions is no reason for not prosecuting the war, though it has been represented as almost an invincible objection. If it is of such weight, we ought to make peace at any rate. But I object altogether to topics of this kind, on the ground that they are Jacobinical: it is pressing into the service of the question things that do not belong to it. The question of war and scarcity must stand on separate grounds. By exciting among the people discontent on account of the scarcity, important proceedings of Administration may be im-

peded, so as even to force Ministers to abandon measures whereon depend the welfare and salvation of the country. On account, therefore, of the mischiefs which are liable to arise from thus mixing topics unconnected in their nature, the practice fully deserves to be branded with the name of Jacobinism, the great characteristic of which is, to take advantage of the discontents of mankind, and turn them to the advantage of its own purposes."

Mr. TIERNEY said, he was not going to avail himself of a right which every Member had in a Committee, that of speaking as often as he pleased; but that of applying a few observations to what had been urged against his former arguments by the Secretary at War. That right honourable gentleman had charged him with having made use of the subject of a scarcity to inflame the minds of the people, to thwart the measures of Government, and thereby to injure the country at large, by possibly driving Ministers to take measures contrary to the general interest, but agreeably to the general will of the public. Nothing was farther from his wish, nor more repugnant to his general practice—witness the ample testimony of his conduct in voting for the supplies through the whole of the war; but the reason why he opposed the present measure was, that the war, as he apprehended, might be carried on by each of the parties at his own expense. He was not against Government carrying on the war; he did not mean to embarrass Government; but he was against sending money out of this country to support others, while others are capable of supporting themselves as well as we can, and, perhaps, better when our scarcity was considered. He did not mean to apply this circumstance of scarcity as against the war, and to have an undue influence on the minds of the people of England; for he repeated it, although he was an enemy to the war, yet such did he believe the spirit of the people of England to be, that an argument of that kind would have but little effect upon them. He believed there was hardly any thing to which they would not submit, rather than sue or be clamorous for peace, while they thought the war was necessary. But the Secretary at War had said, that he (Mr. Tierney) had not so much regard for peace as he had for the Republic of France. What his opinion upon Republics was or might be, was not worth while to discuss at present; he was not that sort of friend to that form of Government which the right honourable gentleman supposed; but surely the right honourable gentleman could not at once, with that consistency he wished to maintain, accuse any man of being a friend to a Republican form of Government, and a friend to Bonaparte; that was a little too much to be maintained by the versatility of the talents even of the

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Secretary at War. The truth was, that as a Member of the English House of Commons, he was neither a friend to the French Republic, nor to Bonaparte, but a friend to what appeared to him to be the political interest of Great Britain; and with these feelings he was ready to say, that if Ministers could succeed in restoring Royalty to France to-night, he should to-morrow morning be as anxious for peace with Royalty in France, as with any other form of Government; for, after eight years war, it did appear to him to be now pretty clear that the form of Government of France ought to be no obstacle to peace. But there was a mist about what some gentlemen said upon that subject, and he wanted gentlemen to speak out, and declare what it is they are contending for. The Secretary at War was a great master of definitions, and a great metaphysician, and it would be well if he would state what he was contending for; he said it was against Chaos—then he was for Royalty—then he was against any system which constituted what he called a negation of order. “Now (said Mr. Tierney) I am going to say that which I know is not strictly regular; but when the House come to think of it, I am in hopes they will excuse it—I mean to say, that the House is to understand me as giving notice now, that I shall shortly bring forward a motion, that this House may know, and consequently that the Public may know, what it is that the Members of our Executive Government mean upon the form of Government in France, as it may apply to the question of peace or war?”

Mr. Chancellor PITT.—“I am glad to hear this notice from the honourable gentleman. I believe the Executive Government will feel no difficulty in meeting that question; and, indeed, I think the honourable gentleman has to-night, as well as on many other occasions, heard what our sentiments are upon that subject.”

Mr. TIERNEY.—“To avoid all misapprehension, I will state distinctly the nature of the motion which I intend to bring forward, without pledging myself to the precision of the words, ‘That it is neither just nor necessary to carry on this war for the purpose of restoring Monarchy in France.’ That is the substance of what I mean to move.”

Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY said, he wished the House and the Country to understand what the principles were on which he should vote this night on the subject now in discussion. He had often been asked by gentlemen on the other side, whether he should vote for an insecure peace? To which he answered, that he certainly would not. He had always been strenuous for carrying on the war until we should have a secure peace; for that was as long,

but no longer, than he should think the war necessary to be continued. He thought, however, it was now *possible*, for he would not say it was absolutely *certain*, that such terms might be had as may be satisfactory to the country. No attempt had been made; on the contrary, the offer from the enemy had been rejected by our Ministers—that rejection was dissatisfactory to his mind, and so he thought it must be to the people of this country. Could any man say what the effect of negotiation might be? How could Ministers be sure that, if we had opened a negotiation, the French Government would not give up Belgium? He was for making the power of this country as great as possible during the war; but he disavowed entirely the sentiment of restoring Monarchy in France. Should the French restore Monarchy without our interference, it would be a very different thing in its effect from that of force by others, and might have a different effect on the continuance of such a Government; but he thought the restoration of Monarchy in France was that which never could be accomplished by means of foreign power. Gentlemen talked of the tyranny of the French yoke; he was afraid that our information (he meant the information of Government) was very defective upon the subject of the sentiments of the people of France. Ministers took much of their information from persons who were exiled from their native country; they were biased in their judgments upon that subject, for which he did not blame them, for they were guided by their wishes; they thought there was in France, because they wished there was in France, a general disposition to a restoration of Monarchy. He did not blame these men for being of this opinion; but it was not wise in our Executive Government to take their information from such a source; for he really thought that the great mass of the people of France still retained sentiments quite the other way; and yet he thought Ministers acted wrong in refusing to open a negotiation, for he would as soon trust one Government as another; the whole with him was a question of terms. There was, in the overtures made to this Government on the part of France, a general but loose and remote allusion to a general peace: if that was too vague on the part of France, our Ministers should have returned an answer to that effect—not that during all or any part of this time we should have agreed to a cessation of hostilities; that he should have opposed, if any one had proposed it; but Ministers should have endeavoured to know what the terms were which the French were willing to accede to, instead of rejecting all consideration of them before they knew what they were. He thought Ministers committed a great error in this proceeding. Even while the negotiation was going on,

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he should have been for strengthening the hands of Government as much as possible, and that might possibly have had a good effect on the negotiation itself; but because Ministers neglected to try the effect of a negotiation, he thought they were wrong; and as the measure now before the House was part of that system which, in his opinion, was founded in error, he should therefore vote against the present motion.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH said, that many gentlemen had exercised their talents upon topics which referred rather more to the subject of which his honourable friend had given notice, than that which was before the Committee, but whom he should not follow until an opportunity should be given to discuss such topics regularly; but he could not help observing, that the Secretary at War, who was an utter disclaimer of all wanderings from the subject in debate, went rather farther than became his ability and usual practice. He said, that those who were opposite to him in the House, had shewn a great attachment to the French Republic, and the Rulers of its Revolution, through all its stages. He, on the other hand, saw no more attachment in any one than this, a desire to make peace with any one of the Governments that have been set up in France since the commencement of the French Revolution, if a favourable opportunity should offer for that purpose. He saw nothing to blame in that:—he was one of those who would have made peace at Lisle—he was one of those who would have made peace at Paris—he was one of those who would make peace at the present moment, provided we could have a peace that was just and honourable. It might be said, that such an event was impossible; to which he would answer, there was no knowing that without trying. Gentlemen, in arguing the subject before the Committee, often asked whether we should carry on the war with vigour or not? That, he took leave to say, was not the real question to be discussed to-night, but whether the measure now before the Committee was in itself a fit one or not? This proposition appeared to him to be in substance neither more nor less than this: “Whether we shall pay the powers of Germany for fighting their own battles, or not?” These powers admitted they were interested as much as we are in this contest; and therefore it must be, that we are about to pay them for taking care of their own interest, and performing their own business—a thing which was not only superfluous, but bordered upon the ridiculous and absurd. That the Emperor of Germany was both able and willing to carry on the war without our aid, had been demonstrated by what had happened in the two last campaigns. But it was said, that the negotiation was breaking up the Confederacy. He wondered that, when Ministers made use

of this argument, they did not think of the conduct of our allies. What did the Emperor of Germany do in the treaty of Campo Formio? What, in truth, was the Emperor of Russia now doing? Truly, breaking the confederacy—and that upon reasons that were of so selfish and paltry a nature, that they could not be avowed without shame. This reminded him of the misapplication of some epithets made use of upon this subject, he meant the epithet “magnanimous.”—The right honourable gentleman had complained of the use which had been made, in the course of debate, of the scarcity with which this country was at present visited. He was of opinion, that it was a subject which ought not to be mentioned by any body unless some good was intended to be produced by it; but while it was brought forward with that view, it was not only justifiably so done, but it was a duty to do it so. There was no view of creating any alarm in the people of this country in the mind of his honourable friend, when he mentioned the subject of the scarcity; he was perfectly sure of that; it was only mentioned with a view of calling on the Members of that House to look at the real situation of this country, without which they could never be qualified to form an opinion upon this subject; nor could any thing that was said upon this subject of scarcity, by his honourable friend, be more likely to excite alarm than the Report of the Committee to whom that subject was referred—not that he blamed the Committee for its Report, nor the House for directing it to be made; he only mentioned it to shew that the notice which was taken of the scarcity in this country, was not taken for the first time to-night by his honourable friend. He repeated, that it appeared to him to be a great misconduct in Ministers to give away the money of Great Britain to other powers, who, if Ministers chose to be consistent in their language, were bound to take care of themselves as much as we are; and the powers upon the Continent had proved themselves able to maintain this contest without our aid. As they are as much interested as we can be in doing so, it is very superfluous in us to pay them for it, because it is superfluous to pay people for pursuing their own interest.”

The House then divided:—

For the motion, 162; Against it, 19.

LIST of the MINORITY.

Adair, R.	Kemp, T.	Saville, C.
Biddulph, R.	Knight, R.	Sheridan, R. B.
Bird, W. W.	Martin, J.	Tierney, G.
Bouverie, Hon. W.	Milner, Sir W.	Tuiston, Hon. J.
Brogden, J.	North, D.	Western, C. C.
Copley, Sir L.	Plomer, W.	TELLER. Smith, W.
Hobhouse, B.	Richardson, J.	

Tuesday, February 18.

PUBLIC RECORDS OF THE KINGDOM.

Mr. ABBOT said, that in consequence of the notice which had been given for him by his right honourable friend, the Master of the Rolls, he wished to call the attention of the House to the state of the Public Records of the Kingdom. And that whoever had reflected upon the importance of preserving the public records and archives in any country which enjoyed the blessings of a settled Constitution and Government, and looked to the condition of our public records in this country, with a view to their practical utility in matters of Legislation, State, or Judicature, would certainly find them, in some of the principal repositories, preserved with sufficient order and regularity, and in some few, with a method and care which are exemplary; but that in numberless instances, and in many of the most important departments, they were wholly unarranged, undescribed, and unascertained; some of them exposed to erasure, alteration, and embezzlement, by interested parties, and others lodged in places where they are daily rotting by damp, or incurring the continual risk of destruction by fire.

That this state of things had come to pass, was not owing to any intentional disregard of this subject, on the part of the Crown, or Parliament; but to a variety of events, all of which had contributed, in different ways, to produce this result.

The public attention had always been directed to this object, from early times. And in some of the very first petitions upon the rolls of Parliament, the public records of the kingdom are emphatically styled the people's evidences, and it is ordained that they shall be made accessible to all the King's subjects. At some periods the Sovereign alone, at others the Houses of Parliament separately, and at others the King and Parliament conjointly, had interposed to make special provisions and regulations for their due preservation and arrangement. But unfortunately almost all the provisions established by the vigilance of successive reigns were broken down by the civil wars of the last century, and no effectual measures were adopted to retrieve the mischiefs produced by those times of confusion until the reign of Queen Anne. At that period Lord Hallifax, in conjunction with the then Speaker, Mr. Harley (afterwards Lord Oxford), projected and carried into effect the design of collecting that magnificent compilation of state papers and records which the public now possess under the name of Rymer's *Fædera*.

But as that great national work chiefly related to the foreign transactions of this country, Lord Hallifax afterwards, with the zealous co-operation of Lord Somers, proposed to the House of Lords to investigate the state of our domestic records, as connected with our internal laws and government. That inquiry was prosecuted without intermission, and with many salutary consequences, through the reigns of Queen Anne and George the First, down to the commencement of the reign of his late Majesty ;—at which time this House was induced, after the fire which happened to the Cottonian Library, to set on foot another inquiry by its own authority, still more extensive and effectual ; and the very valuable report made at the conclusion of that proceeding, together with an earnest and unanimous address of the House of Commons in support of the measures which it recommended, was laid at the foot of the Throne.

Since that transaction, a period had now elapsed of nearly seventy years, during which some of the measures recommended by that report had been adopted very effectually, although others of them had not been fully executed. And not only the very lapse of time had progressively superadded a large accumulation of materials in every department to which that investigation extended, but many other repositories of great national importance, such as the courts maritime and ecclesiastical, had not fallen within the scope of the former inquiries, nor had they extended to Scotland. And besides that the Cathedral and University libraries were not then explored, the public had since acquired other collections equal in value to any of those already enumerated, such as the Royal, the Harleian, and the Sloanian, which now constitute the British Museum. Thus the difficulties of introducing method and arrangement had multiplied with the increase of materials : in addition to which, a new source of embarrassment had been created by the change which took place during the same interval of time in the language and written character of judicial proceedings ; a change, which, without questioning its utility in other respects, had altered the mode of education of those persons whose professional habits should have made them most conversant with these matters ; so that few, very few persons possessing even by tradition the technical knowledge belonging to these subjects are now to be met with.

It was obvious that the practical evils resulting from this train of circumstances must be very considerable. And some of them were so striking and singular, and of such opposite sorts, that the statement of them would prove the urgency of some parliamentary

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interposition. Within the walls of the House of Commons itself, there were loads of records, noticed in the reports of Parliament nearly a century ago, and of which no man knew the contents, though they were supposed to belong to the Courts of Common Law; but nevertheless they still remain in their present situation, for want of some proper authority to remove them, or to receive them elsewhere. In the Courts of Common Law themselves, those rolls which are called the Docquets of Judgments, and materially concern the titles to landed property, so far as they belong to the Court of King's Bench, are exposed to the daily risk of being burnt; and those of the Common Pleas, besides suffering an equal risk of fire, are actually perishing by damp. In the Exchequer of Equity, such is the defect of establishment, that any of the antient decrees relating to tithes, boundaries, customs, and other rights, of the most valuable nature, may be falsified, or removed by any person whatever, almost without check or restraint; and there were persons at this time within hearing, who knew that such abuses had been practised. In the office of the Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer the evil was of a different sort; and there, for want of accommodation, the records were utterly inaccessible, so that questions of public moment were now suspended for the want of documents, known to be lodged here, but which could not be produced, or selected, from the general mass of confusion. In the Pipe-office, another branch of the Exchequer, where by law every public accountant ought to have his quietus recorded, it had been represented three years ago to a Committee of this House (the Finance Committee) that no person, however deeply interested in the affairs of any public accountant, either as principal or surety, could obtain a certificate of the state of his final balance or discharge. An evil of a still different sort occurred in the instance of special commissions for the trials of treasons; and however strange it might appear, it was strictly true, that the proceedings under the commission executed in the north after the rebellion in 1745, and those in London in 1794, and at Maidstone in 1798, remained now in the unauthenticated custody of private persons,—without any blame whatever being imputable to them—but for want of proper process to remove them to their proper place of deposit. And that as to the affairs of Scotland or Ireland, so broken and disjointed were all the documents relating to those countries, that there was no place in which any man might not search for them with some expectation of success, and no place where he could be certain that his search would be successful.

He next stated, that although this was the real condition of the public records, he was by no means confident that some persons might not be of opinion, that no great harm would ensue if all these parchments and papers were left to perish in their dust, or were fairly disposed of by one general conflagration; and he was disposed to apprehend this the more, because it was well known that the levellers in the last century had actually proposed that expedient, and there might be some men now, who not unwisely for the same ends, might hold the same opinions. But this was perfectly clear, that there could be no rational medium whatever, between adopting that summary expedient, or taking the most effectual means for their arrangement and preservation. Many strong reasons of personal interest and public policy must prove this to every man who had either landed property to defend, or who felt a value for the Constitution under which he lived. And whatever might be the indifference with which those things were regarded in the abstract, he would ask any land-owner, either in the House or out of it—whether, if his title came to be litigated, he would not resort to those repositories with the greatest anxiety, and think himself most secure if he found it was warranted by some royal grant, some antient perambulation, or public survey. That corporate franchises, and many of the most valuable rights of the church, had no other solid foundation; and that in Parliament itself, besides the periodical discussions which arise before Committees upon election rights, which are often deeply involved in these researches,—whenever the two Houses unhappily differ, it is by the recorded transactions of their ancestors that their conferences must be guided; for they have no other umpire to which they can resort; and even Parliament, in its entire capacity, has at no very distant period, and upon occasions of the most solemn concern, looked to those repositories for the most certain standard of its proceedings, in times and upon questions the most arduous. He trusted, therefore, that it was not too much to assert, in the language of Lord Hallifax's Report “that it will be a public damage, and dishonour to the kingdom, to suffer such monuments of antiquity to perish.”

He then proceeded to state the leading points, to which he proposed that the present inquiry should be directed. In the first place he proposed to call upon the proper officers of every principal repository in England, who was entrusted with any records or instruments in which the public has a concern, requiring him to state the sorts of instruments in his possession, and the periods of time to which they relate; extending this inquiry also to Scotland, where matters of this nature had been in all times regulated with the most

exemplary care ; and meaning that the contents of all these returns should be afterwards methodized and digested by competent and experienced persons, to be authorized and employed for the express purpose of furnishing the House with the most correct information in the most convenient form. In the next place, he should propose to ascertain the state of the buildings in which the public records are lodged, as to their security and accommodation ; with a view to have those public buildings repaired which may require it,—and in some instances possibly to render other buildings public property, which are at present inconveniently holden by private tenure ; but in no case to disturb any possession, or change the custody of any records, except perhaps in some very few instances of most evident right, and upon the most cogent reasons of unquestionable utility. And, in the last place, for the purpose of rendering the access to these repositories most complete, to call for an explanation of the state of their catalogues and calendars, and also of their establishments and regulations for conducting searches, with a view on this head to provide more effectually for the security of the records themselves, at the same time that the use of them might be rendered more convenient to His Majesty's subjects.

From this course of proceeding, beyond the execution of these particular details, there were also other consequences likely to follow, and which ought not to be wholly unnoticed. The very event of a parliamentary visitation would impress the officers of each department with a stronger sense of their duty, knowing that their conduct, if meritorious, would not be unobserved, and that any culpable negligence might not escape animadversion ; and this salutary impression would endure long after the event of this particular inquiry, because the period when a similar visitation might be expected to occur must always be indefinite. Another consequence which might probably follow, would be the discovery of many valuable monuments of the policy of our ancestors, which it might not be unprofitable to keep in view hereafter ; and if the survey of this country, contained in the books of Domesday, has been always truly accounted a work of great public importance, it would be gratifying to the House to know that other surveys may be found, which were executed in the reign of Edward I. II. and III. (for some of them the honourable Member had seen) which would be of infinitely greater value than Domesday itself, if they should be found complete, inasmuch as they come two or three centuries nearer to our own times, and contain more curious and comprehensive views of the civil and ecclesiastical state of this country, at the periods to which they relate. But there was still one object beyond all these,

upon which he could not but entertain a sanguine hope ; that every new light thrown upon this subject would convince Parliament at last of the necessity and facility of establishing a general registration of all instruments affecting landed property. In Scotland this system has already prevailed for ages, with the happiest consequences to those who belong to that part of the united kingdom ; in Ireland the same system has obtained for near a century, with the same beneficial consequences ; and in the two most populous districts of England, namely, Middlesex and Yorkshire, where the same plan has been established for the same length of time, though upon a narrower scale, it has been found to add a distinct and specific value to the property which it secures ; many recent events have contributed to dissipate the prejudices which once hung upon this question, and it now remains only by transcribing one short and approved law to extend the same benefits throughout the rest of England. This considered merely as an improvement of our juridical system would be one of the greatest which could be devised. But as a measure of state policy, it was demonstrably clear, that whatever establishes security and good faith between man and man in transactions respecting landed property, tends to facilitate the reciprocal exchange and conversion of the landed and monied capital ; and the giving to capital an increased activity, will necessarily increase its total amount. Nor was it altogether to be disregarded as offering a new and reasonable source of revenue ; for no man would have to pay for recording his title, without receiving at the same time a specific and corresponding benefit, by the additional security given to his possession ; and the produce of such a revenue would be continually rising with the multiplied population and increasing prosperity of the country.

He concluded with stating, that although he had dwelt upon these latter topics, because they made part of his general view of the subject, it was not his intention to propose any examination of what might be politic for the House to adopt, in respect of any new institution, or any extension of former systems, but only to ascertain the state of those already established. He therefore moved—

“ For a Committee to inquire into the public records of this kingdom, and of such other public instruments, rolls, books, and papers, as they shall think proper ; and to report to the House the nature and condition thereof, together with what they shall judge fit to be done for the better arrangement, preservation, and more convenient use of the same.”

The MASTER OF THE ROLLS seconded the motion, and said the proposed inquiry had his most cordial assent.

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A Select Committee was accordingly appointed, consisting of

The Master of the Rolls,	Sir William Scott,
The Attorney General,	Mr. Douglas,
The Solicitor General,	Mr. Percival,
The Lord Advocate of Scotland,	Mr. Charles Yorke,
Lord Hawkesbury,	Mr. Richard Ryder,
	&c. &c. &c.

And it was farther ordered—That all persons authorized by the said Committee, may freely search and have view in all offices and places where any of His Majesty's records are kept, and have such copies as they shall require, signed by every officer, &c. without charge or fees.

Mr. BRAGGE reported from the Committee of the whole House, to whom it was referred to consider farther of the supply granted to His Majesty, the resolution which the Committee had directed him to report to the House ; which is as follows, viz.

“ Resolved, That a sum, not exceeding five hundred thousand pounds, be granted to His Majesty, to enable His Majesty to make such advances as may be necessary for the purpose of ensuring, at an early period, the benefit of a vigorous co-operation against France, in consequence of the engagements which His Majesty is concerting with the Emperor of Germany, the Elector of Bavaria, and the other powers of the empire.”

Lord Hawkesbury moved, that the order of the day for the farther consideration of the corn and bread bill be now read ; which being done, the House resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House, Sir John William Anderson in the chair.

Lord HAWKESBURY said, that there was one proposition which he wished to submit to the Committee, upon the important subject now under their consideration ; but before making it, there were some observations upon the state of this country at the present time, which he wished to suggest, and to call to the attention of the Committee. The origin of this Committee was certainly to be found in a bill which was known by the name of Governor Pownall's bill ; but even at that time, in 1773, the promoters of that bill were of the same opinion which the best informed men now also entertained, that little relief could be obtained in a time of scarcity by interfering with the conduct of millers, or subjecting them to any different regulations from those which now directed them. There was but one proposition which he had now to make—perhaps others might be suggested by other gentlemen ; but he really thought that this was a subject on which little could be done by measures of legislation, on which much more might be expected from

the private and individual influence of gentlemen, by example in their own families, and by recommendation to others, than by any proceedings of Parliament. "Upon the subject of the present scarcity, there is one argument which has often been used by gentlemen on the other side of the House, and particularly by one gentleman whom I do not now see in his place—an argument the most mischievous, the most absurd, and of the wickedest tendency—which deserves animadversion and refutation. It is, that the war in which we are engaged is the cause of the present scarcity. What gentlemen mean by such an assertion, it is hard to conceive. Do they mean that the state of hostilities in which we are placed with some countries in Europe, prevents the importation of grain which otherwise might have been imported into this country? Or do they mean that the war increases the consumption of corn in the country? As to the supposition that the war prevents the importation of corn, it is a known fact, that the average importation for the last seven years is as high as that of any preceding period, and yet during the last seven years we have been at war. In 1796, the importation was much greater than ever was known before; it amounting to between 8 and 900,000 quarters of grain. If the Committee wish to know whether the importation this season bears a proportion to the wants of the country, it appears that though the season at which any importation can be made from the shores of the Baltic, which is the great source from which we draw our supplies, has scarcely commenced; there has been imported into the ports of England and Scotland, since the 26th of September last, 26,291 quarters of wheat, and 45,415 bags of flour, which is equal to 21,421 quarters of wheat, besides considerable supplies of rye, barley, and oats. The war then can have no direct influence in preventing the importation of corn. But it may be said, that it operates by an indirect influence, that it prevents us from importing corn from countries where we could be supplied, because with these countries we are in a state of hostility. The fact is, that it is from the countries on the shores of the Baltic, and from the United States of America, that we receive in ordinary all the supplies of grain which the country requires. Some supply may indeed be furnished this season by France, notwithstanding the war. But before the war, it is well known, that France did not grow any considerable quantity of grain above that which she consumed; and the produce of the Netherlands is in general wholly consumed by the inhabitants, by the United Provinces, and by the people in the less fertile districts up the Rhine. But there is one thing more—perhaps it will be suggested, that the present prices of grain in France are

comparatively low to what they are in this country. This may be easily accounted for by a statement which has been made by a very eminent corn-factor, that the harvest in France was uncommonly favourable: but there is yet another ground which perhaps gentlemen on the other side of the House will be disposed to controvert; this is the miserable state and poverty of the people. It is surprising to see such causes resorted to, to account for the present scarcity, when it is so plainly the consequence of a bad season and of a bad harvest. These are obvious causes, and no other can be pleaded with any degree of probability or truth. It must be allowed that the present scarcity is alarming, and that it ought to call the attention of gentlemen to the management of their own families, and to exert their influence and their power in their neighbourhood, to remedy as far as possible the evils which it may produce. But the danger and the evil are much exaggerated. This may be proved by the statement of a few circumstances, of which every gentleman may judge of the accuracy. They are collected merely from common and well-known calculations and statements. As to the consumption of grain in the country, this must be estimated from the number of the consumers, and the amount of the consumption of each individual. The number of the consumers of wheaten bread depends much upon the abundance of the crop, and upon the consequent price of wheaten bread. When the price is low, the number of the consumers is of course increased; when high, it is diminished. But, on an average, it may be fairly calculated, that there is one third of the people who do not consume wheaten bread. This calculation is not too high, when we consider that a great majority of the people in Scotland, in the counties of Westmoreland, Cumberland, the North Riding of Yorkshire, part of Lancashire, of Wales, of Cornwall, and the northern parts of Devonshire, consume bread made of oats, barley, and other grains. Now, as to the quantity of wheat consumed, a quarter of wheat in the year for each man is the general calculation, and that which Mr. Arthur Young has estimated as coming very near the actual consumption. This allowance of a quarter per man, taken in connection with a computation of the inhabitants of the country, would require about eight, or betwixt eight and nine millions of quarters of wheat, to supply this country for a year. The produce of the country certainly varies in different years; but the average computation between very high and low seasons may come nearest the truth. This average does not feed the country; for the average importation for several years back may be estimated at one twentieth of the whole consumption. The deficiency of the late

crop may be estimated at one-third of the usual crop, which must be added to the twentieth usually imported, in order to estimate what importation will be necessary this season. In opposition to this, however, it must be considered that there was in the country a stock in hand from the preceding harvest sufficient to supply one month. But if we take the foreign corn also in the country at the same period, there was certainly much more than would be consumed in a month. Considering all these circumstances, the probable amount of the importation necessary this season will be about 600,000 quarters of wheat; whereas in 1796 the importation was 800,000 quarters. The millers, and others skilled in the subject, have recommended, and are sanguine in the hopes of success, from adopting some regulations as to the use of new bread; and they have computed, that by such regulations there might be a saving of one fortnight of the whole consumption. Besides, it has been stated, that millers, when the price of grain is high, and consequently when bread is dear, extract from the grain a greater quantity of flour for the nourishment of man than they do at other times; and it is reasonable to suppose that they will do so. This will afford a second saving. A third would arise from the use of substitutes for bread. As the price of grain, even in those countries from which we can receive a supply, is high, viz. both in the United States of America, and in the countries on the shores of the Baltic, it is to be feared that the high price of grain in this country is an inevitable evil; but from the review of all circumstances it may be collected, that there is no real danger of scarcity.—There are yet some farther observations upon this subject, which it may be of advantage to suggest. It ought not to be considered as merely of temporary moment, but gentlemen ought to look forward to all future contingencies of a similar nature, that when such an emergency as the present occurs again, it may not be felt with equal severity. It is clear from experience, that this country does not feed itself. Every year, for several years back, the importation of grain has amounted to 400,000 quarters. This may appear strange when he look back but a few years, and recollect the vast sums expended in bounties for the exportation of grain. So late particularly as the administration of Mr. Pelham, not less than 500,000*l.* were stated to be paid annually by that gentleman in bounties on the exportation of grain. What has caused the difference? Has the agriculture of the country diminished? No; the improvement of our agriculture has kept pace, in this disastrous war, as some gentlemen have called it, with the increase of our trade, the extension of our commerce, and the augmentation of our

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power. This can easily be proved from documents which are subject to the inspection and examination of every gentleman in the Committee. The inclosure of waste lands is certainly one principal means of improving the agriculture of the country. Now, it appears from the Journals of this House, that during seven years, of the most prosperous peace that ever this country enjoyed, the number of inclosure bills which passed the House amounted to 227. Whereas, during the last seven years of war, double the number had been passed; no less than 479. Let us also attend to the improvement which has taken place in husbandry. This cannot be doubted to have taken place in many districts, particularly in the Lowlands of Scotland, and in the border counties. If then the point is proved, that the agriculture of the country has kept pace in improvement with its trade and commerce, and other sources of wealth, what is the cause that such a change has taken place in the adequacy of the produce of the country to the support of its inhabitants? It must be imputed solely to the immense increase of population, and to the increased consumption of the individual inhabitants, in consequence of their increased wealth. There never yet was an instance of a highly flourishing State, which had attained the period of its grandeur, producing enough to maintain its inhabitants. If we look back to the Republic of Rome, we shall find this observation confirmed in its history. As soon as it attained power and greatness, it was obliged to have recourse to other countries for supplies of grain. Sicily was its first granary, and afterwards Egypt. And if we look to the state of the world at present, we shall have no occasion to depart from this statement. It will not surely be said, that the countries which border on the Baltic, and particularly Poland, from which we draw our principal supplies of grain, and which export the greatest quantity, are the most flourishing in Europe. The United States of America form no exception, because, though flourishing, that country is yet in an infant state. The crop then, in general, in this country, is not sufficient for the supply of the inhabitants; and when this and the ordinary importation fail, the best method that can be adopted is the use of substitutes: it is, indeed, difficult to introduce them. The habits and (it is to be hoped no blame will be attached to the word) the prejudices of the people, will at first oppose their introduction. It is difficult to change old habits; but for such a purpose the attempt ought to be made and persevered in. Were this plan adopted, this country, I am convinced, contains in itself the means of feeding its inhabitants. At present it must be allowed, that the method of feeding it is not the most economical. Great

economy might be introduced, and every person would rejoice, that by the efforts of individuals (and it is but respectful to mention the name of Count Rumford) this economy was already reduced by many to practice. It appeared from his calculations and statements, that one third more sustenance might be derived from many articles of provision, without abridging the luxuries of the rich, than was usually drawn from them. The use of substitutes is particularly to be recommended in charities and in parochial relief. This would be one means of introducing them; and though their general introduction might not be effected at once, yet it must be recollected that this is not the first year of scarcity that we have felt; that it will not be the last; that within these five years it is the second time that a scarcity has occurred. Thus it appears, that though inclosures have been going on rapidly, and that though agriculture has been improving, the increase of population has out-run them. Lord Hawkesbury concluded with passing a high encomium on the liberality which the rich had displayed in alleviating the distresses and in supplying the wants of the poor, and also on the poor for their becoming conduct;—and moved, “That the Chairman be directed to report, that it is the opinion of this Committee, that leave be granted to bring in a bill to prohibit bakers from exposing any bread for sale which has not been baked a certain number of hours.”

Mr. HOBHOUSE said, that he did not rise to oppose the noble Lord (Hawkesbury), but to express his joy that the subject had been at last taken into consideration. He could not help expressing his astonishment, that this business was not brought forward before. It would have been better for the country, had it received an earlier attention, and employed some of the time wasted in a long adjournment; for it was known long since that the harvest had failed, and scarcity must ensue.

He was ready to admit that the scarcity was, principally, to be attributed to the deficiency of the crops; but he insisted that the war not only increased consumption, but cut off some of the means of supply, by shutting many of the ports of Europe against us, namely, the ports of Holland, Flanders, and France; and rendered every article of import dearer by the advanced price of freight and insurance. On the testimony of Mr. Claude Scott, a gentleman of information on that subject, it was asserted in the report, that war prevented that abundance which, in time of peace, would come into the market. But no authority was wanting; for the fact was obvious. In that respect, as well as many others, the war, stated by the noble Lord to bring with it so many blessings, because agriculture and com-

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merce had increased in great and equal proportions, was, indeed, most calamitous. It pressed heavily upon the lower classes, by raising the price of that first necessary of life, upon which they almost entirely subsisted.

With respect to the proposed remedy against the existing evil, he approved it, as far as it went, and was glad to hear that some others were in contemplation. He thought, however, that little could be expected from positive laws, and that more was to be done by exhortation, by example, and by charity properly distributed. He had no doubt that the gentlemen whom he now addressed, and the affluent among all ranks, would exert themselves upon the present trying occasion. It was the duty of every one to strive to alleviate the distresses of the poor: he would himself make every effort for that purpose. He wished, before he sat down, to correct an error in the statement of the noble Lord. His honourable friend, not now present, to whom the noble Lord had alluded (Mr. Nicholls), had not said that the war was the cause of the scarcity. Upon that point he had expressed no opinion; he had only shewn what an immense sum, in his judgment, would be wanting, for the purpose of relieving that scarcity, and guarding against the horrors of famine; and had on that account entreated the House to pause before they determined to give large subsidies to foreign powers.

The SPEAKER said, that he would take up a short time of the attention of the Committee, on a subject not inferior in importance to any that ever engaged its attention. Should any difference of opinion arise between the gentlemen who drew up the Report and him, he would express that dissent with diffidence, sensible of the candour and merit of those gentlemen. He, from his situation, had not time to give this subject all the attention it so highly merited, nor to acquire that information which made them so much better qualified to judge upon a subject so weighty and extensive. With respect to the proposition, no one was likely to differ on that; neither was there a difference of opinion on the regulation of bread, or on the bounty of individuals. Should any error arise to convert the scarcity of grain from its real cause, a cause inseparable from peace as well as war, into the circumstances of the war alone, such an error must be founded in a misunderstanding of the subject. He would, with due deference to the gentlemen of the Committee who sent up the Report, just turn to the sixth article, where it is said, "Your Committee are of opinion, that to change by law the food of a large part of the community, is a measure of the greatest delicacy, and on the face of it highly objectionable. If a considerable benefit could be proved to arise from it to the community

at large, your Committee might be induced to recommend it," &c. &c. He had now to remark, that we were more embarrassed than we were in 1795; for, on referring to the Report of that year, it will be found it was but a partial failure. Though the crops of wheat had failed, the other crops of grain were successful. This was a circumstance on which we could not now rest our calculation. The use he would make of this was, that we should derive from the grain of the wheat the greatest possible quantity of flour. The calculation, as it now stands, is in the proportion of 47lb. of flour to 60lb. of grain, as that which makes the properest aliment for man. The reasoning on this proportion in the Report, does not appear to him conclusive. It is admitted, that a nearer proportion of 52lb. to 59lb. may be applied to the nutriment of bread. In 1795, a Committee reported, and on agreement did not allow so much as 7lb. He found in the third Report, a diminution of 5lb. only was admitted. He asked why was it not as necessary now as then? and until he heard a reason, he should think so. He found it stated on report, that on the testimony of a miller, excellent bread may be made of the whole wheat, without taking away any of the bran: and a gentleman has proved it to be so; for he himself had seen a bread made of that kind. He had now to state, upon the authority of a person, to whose exemplary life he owed the first of all obligations, that the best bread was made of the entire wheat. On mentioning the different classes into which the ancients divided their bread, he said, that the first was made of the finest flour; the second was a mixture of that flour with the pollard; and the third class was the whole flour with the bran. That of those three breads, the first and second, seemed to have been little used; but that the third sort was general, from its excellent effects. On experiment, it was found by chemists that this sort contained a vast quantity of essential oil; and in this consisted the true spirit of the wheat; not that which was fiery and caused fermentation, but that which was mild and nutritious. Had this consideration been early attended to, there would be now no cause of alarm. This was the sentiment of a person who was never disposed to give his opinion but upon just and deliberate reasons. He then said, that he approved of the noble Lord's plan, but did not see the objections to any proper compulsory law in so strong a light as he did. Let us but once convince the people of the necessity of submitting for the common good, and take with them a fellowship in their sufferings, and we shall soon be possessed of their compliance with whatever law we propose for such a purpose. He found too upon report another consideration which he would wish to admit. On the

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testimony of a miller, it is proved that damaged wheat may be amended by a commixture with the good. The use to be made of this observation was, that on the supply from America we should adopt the most effectual methods to render that supply efficient; and here he would wish to submit to the attention of the Committee the idea of a compulsory law, as that grain may be mingled up with the damaged to a proper degree, and be brought to the sustenance of man. On his part, he sincerely wished all might be done by admonition and example. He had great satisfaction in listening to measures of precaution; he thought too they should be followed up. Should an abundant or an average harvest grow up, he thought precaution and foresight necessary. He thought the cultivation of a vegetable which was the next best substitute for bread, he meant potatoes, should be encouraged. This might be brought into consumption about July and August, and might fill up the time between the old and new harvest. On the cultivation of potatoes, he thought it would be matter of encouragement, if the tythes on potatoes were made equal to the tythes on wheat, a circumstance which at present tended much to discourage their growth. This was a matter for contemplation. He had also to state his extreme apprehensions on the rise of butchers' meat. From the lower parts of the country which were flooded from the continual rains, great quantities of cattle were destroyed and sent up early to market; in order to remedy that evil, he wished the country to get a little repose. This respite might be gained by the use of swine, the increase of which he recommended. One plentiful year would restore many years of scarcity. Another commodity he would recommend as a guard against the evil, was the importation of rice, which was so low in Bengal as one farthing the pound. This was a food suitable to sedentary persons, and might be sold in this country for three halfpence the pound. The length of the voyage, the risk of the speculation, might discourage individuals, but it might come under the contemplation of Government. The improving state of agriculture was strongly marked in the number of inclosures; and on this he had to felicitate the country. Yet, great as this spirit was, he wished it was still more promoted. The House, he was sure, would always give its cordial assistance to every attempt of this kind; and he had to regret that there should be so great a drawback on it, as to make the charges so high, that a sum of almost 240*l.* was necessary to carry a bill of inclosure through its respective stages. It was said by an honourable Member, in allusion to a certain high character (the Lord Chancellor), that no consideration could compensate him for the fees of his place on those occasions.

On this he had to say, that if the charges on bills attending such measures discouraged them, it was not owing to any want of spirit or liberality in that noble person. And it was a duty and respect he owed to him, to inform that honourable Member who said so, that if he knew that noble Lord as he did, he would not say so of him: and he had it now in his power to remove the opprobrium of such an imputation, by contradicting it. The charges arose from solicitors and other persons swelling out their bills to this large amount, and not to the demands or fees of the Speaker's office in the House of Lords. He concluded by a handsome panegyric on the liberality of the country, which had so generously come forward in relief of the poor. The different classes were more nearly linked together; and the poor were now taught to consider those as their friends and benefactors, whom they regarded before with an invidious and angry eye. The cottage and palace were united in the general pressure, and the rich and poor in feeling and respect for one another. He then gave his assent to the motion.

Lord HAWKESBURY said, he had heard with great pleasure the opinion stated by the right honourable gentleman; and referring to the opinion of the Committee, he stated, that they had considered how far it would be useful to put restrictions upon the millers as to the quality of the ground corn, and they had found that the utmost saving would only amount to one-30th of the whole grain obliged to be made use of. From a consideration of all points, his Lordship said, the Committee were of opinion, that to propose to enact by law, that only a coarser sort of bread should be used, would not produce a saving adequate to the inconveniences which it was likely to produce to the community. With regard to the importation, he must observe in answer to what had fallen from an honourable gentleman (Mr. Hobhouse) that all the foreign ports from which we could expect supplies, were merely those which had not been engaged in war; such were the supplies to be drawn from some parts of the Baltic and America, and these supplies were not to be expected to any great extent.

The SPEAKER explained. He said his idea was, that the Committee had rather gone too far in excluding the coarser parts of bread from the food of the common people. What he meant to recommend, was the use of that sort of bread from which not only the bran, but the coarser part of the wheat might be extracted.

Mr. W. BIRD thought that the noble Lord (Hawkesbury) went too far in saying that any man who connected the war and the scarcity together, was no good subject. He, for one, must be of

opinion, that it is a noble Lord's duty to inform the members of the House of Commons of the number of honours existing from about the consumption to find out the commercial distribution of the goods would not be abundant in this supply factually.

Mr. whether of bread compulsory metropolitan their food to that the number of which for no reason, saving that if on various would ground carried opinion brought to hear that weight was given the wheat derived the wheat

opinion, that though the war was not the cause of the scarcity, yet that it occasioned the continuance of that scarcity. Would the noble Lord say, that the quantity of troops on the Rhine, the numbers sent to Holland, those of Russia brought over to England, the number of French prisoners in this country (lumber, as the right honourable Secretary had called them), had nothing to do with the existing scarcity? As we could not depend upon a large supply from abroad, it behoved the country to attend to a decrease of the consumption of corn. He thought it little better than a mockery to find the noble Lord, in the name of the Committee, merely recommending the use of stale bread, and that the rich should not distribute their charity to the poor in bread. For his part, it was not the poor whom he wished to see deprived of the use of bread, but would rather recommend a saving in this article to the rich, who abounded in other superfluities. Let the rich but deny themselves this supply for a month or two, and they would serve the poor effectually, and bring down the blessings of thousands upon them.

Mr. SYLVESTER DOUGLAS said, that upon the question whether it would be adviseable to restrain the making of a better sort of bread, the Committee had thought it better not to introduce a compulsory clause, which would oblige all the inhabitants of the metropolis to alter their habits with respect to an essential article of their food: at the same time they had given no opinion contrary to that of the right honourable gentleman, namely, that none of the nutriment and food for man should be extracted from the flour of wheat. After farther vindicating the opinion of the Committee for not proposing a compulsory clause, Mr. Douglas stated his opinion, that still farther reductions might be accomplished from the savings proposed than were stated by the Committee. He thought, that if the whole meal was brought into private families, they would on various accounts be induced to sift it by some apparatus, which would cause a greater loss than upon the present plan. That which was ground into the coarse flour, having more of the bran, could not be carried to such a distance; and therefore a great part of this, in the opinion of those who had given evidence before the Committee, if brought to the London market, would be lost, as it would be liable to heat and to be spoiled. It had also been stated by bakers, that the same quantity of coarse flour did not produce the same weight as the fine flour; and that upon eighty loaves, one loaf more was gained in weight upon fine than upon coarse loaves. Upon the whole, the Committee had employed all the extent of their understanding, and desired in their report as much as possible to meet the wishes of the country in general, and the poor in particular.

Sir W. YOUNG also justified the Committee's not proposing a compulsory clause. He complimented the opinion quoted in the speech of the right honourable gentleman (the Speaker); and at the same time noticed the opinion of the physicians before the Committee, who stated, that they would not say whether the white or brown bread would prove most nutritious, till they knew the habits of the people. It would be dangerous, therefore, for the Committee to make experiments on the tempers and habits of the people, especially when the question, "What the saving would be by such alteration," was so problematical. He trusted that much regard would not be had to the declamation of an honourable Member (Mr. Bird), when he said that the Report of the Committee was but of little use, because it did not accomplish more. Nor was the insinuation less mischievous, that the war was the cause of the scarcity. France was undoubtedly contiguous to this country, and might in time of peace furnish some supply of corn; but by the best intelligence which had lately been derived from that country, it appeared that France had fallen full one-third short of what was wanted for the consumption of that country; so that it could not be supposed, even if peace were made, that France would take off its embargo.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, he was not a Member of the Committee; but from the character of those who constituted it, from their means of information, and their earnest desire to promote the welfare of the community, he must be satisfied that they had done every thing which could be expected of them. He hoped that gentlemen would exercise their minds in devising the means of obtaining farther supplies, rather than in criticising the efforts of others. It appeared to him, that if the whole grain were used, if not universally, yet in part, it would serve to lengthen out the supply wanted. He was also led to think, that in part the Legislature were warranted to interfere, and particularly that in all parochial relief of bread or flour, it should consist only of that made of the whole-grain. He could not believe that the present scarcity arose either from the war, or from any increase of population, but rather that it was owing to the uncommonly wet and unfavourable season. There were various sources whence he apprehended the country might look for supplies. The first of these arose from importation. This, indeed, was not the source whence we could be most secure, or look with any great degree of expectation. Although none ought to speak slightly of the supply to be derived from importation, yet he agreed with his noble friend that the means of relief he had proposed were as likely to be beneficial as that to be

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derived from importation. Another mode of economy he would suggest to the Committee was, that of bringing animal food in the shape of soup into more general use. He questioned, indeed, whether this could become a subject of legislative provision; perhaps it was connected with the agricultural breed of fat cattle. At present he merely threw out the idea for gentlemen's consideration. Whoever walked along the streets of the metropolis, might have remarked another way in which economy was required in the use of flour—he alluded to those shops in which rolls, fancy biscuits, and articles of imagination in the way of flour were displayed. These did not contribute either to the support or comfort of man. Various advantages would attend the prohibition of such articles in which fine flour was made use of—a greater degree of nourishment would then be restored to the coarser parts of bread when mixed with the finer. Another mode of economy was that which he considered as extremely important to mention—referring to the northern parts of the kingdom, he observed, that oats was much more made use of for food than in this part of the country. He had made inquiries, and as the result of them had learnt, that the quantity of oats grown in this country was considerably larger than that of wheat. If it should be found necessary to prohibit the use of oats, except for the food of man (allowing for the demand that would be made for the cavalry, mail-coach horses, &c.) he apprehended that this very prohibition would go a great way to substitute plenty for scarcity. Not only would it materially operate to the relief of those parts of the kingdom where oats was a common article of food of the lower orders of the people, but others might thereby have their prejudices removed, and be induced to make use of oatmeal also. From a calculation he held in his hand, the annual consumption of oats he computed at ten millions of quarters. If immediate measures were adopted, the saving in the use of this article for other purposes save that for the food of man, must be very considerable. To this resource he would add, that which was to be obtained by production. One ample source of supply from the bounty of Providence, was our fisheries. The result of his inquiries on this head was to the highest degree satisfactory; and he was persuaded, that if proper means were used, and proper encouragement was given, the greatest supply might be afforded. He understood there were vast quantities of herrings caught, which, under proper regulations, might be increased to any extent to which capital could be employed. There was also the mackarel fishery on the coast of Cornwall, which might be carried to a prodigious extent: and if proper encouragement were given for the catching, curing, and bringing to market, these

various sorts of fish, the greatest advantages would result to the community. He understood also, that the quantity of fish which could be obtained from Newfoundland in the course of a few months, was almost sufficient to feed all the inhabitants of this country; no less than 500,000 quintals being, it is said, caught in the year. He said, he had also inquired what encouragement could be given for the production of things at home. He understood, from a gentleman of experience (Mr. Arthur Young), that *early potatoes* and *beans* might be brought into use in the month of June, &c.; and a few thousands granted in premiums for the growth of them would bring to market a vast quantity. The only difficulty, and which that gentleman had stated, was that of obtaining a sufficient quantity of seed; he thought, therefore, that immediate measures ought to be taken for preserving a sufficient quantity of that part proper for seed. He would wish to leave the mode of distributing these premiums to the judgment of the Board of Agriculture. On this head there would be no occasion to contend with common prejudices, which would be an advantage: but to effectuate this object, he must press it upon the minds of the Committee, that not an hour was to be lost.

Mr. BUXTON said, that as to what had been observed upon the subject of premium for the encouragement of agriculture, the answer to it was, that the high price of the articles which agriculture produces, is the best premium for its encouragement. This was an observation only by the bye; the chief reason for which he rose was to refute an assertion which was made by an honourable gentleman on the other side of the House, and on which he would have said more if that gentleman had not left the House; he meant the assertion that the high price of wheat was partly caused by the war. This he, as a person concerned to a considerable extent in agriculture, would undertake to say, was an assertion that was absolutely groundless. He should again say, that the war was not the cause of the high price of wheat; having said this, he must beg leave to add, that an imputation had been cast, which was not deserved, on his honourable friend, and that was, that this subject was not attended to sufficiently early. The truth was, that application was made, and attention paid to this matter very early in this session; for almost at the opening of it an act was passed for the importation of corn, which was the best way of attending to the subject at that period.

The motion was then put and carried.

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The Chairman of the Committee, Sir John W. Anderson, moved, "That leave be given to bring in a bill to prohibit any person or persons from selling, or offering to sale, any bread which has not been baked for a certain number of hours."

The question being put,

The MASTER OF THE ROLLS said, he could not flatter himself that this plan which was now before the House would have those extensively beneficial effects which some gentlemen expected, and which all could wish; but whatever the advantages might be, he thought it was right we should have them as soon as possible; the bill might be brought in without delay, and with only one blank, which could be filled up in a moment; and he hoped therefore that the bill might be made to go through all its stages in one day.

Lord HAWKESBURY thought that this might possibly be done.

The question was then put and carried.

Sir John W. Anderson and Lord Hawkesbury were directed to prepare and bring in the bill.

Leave was given for this Committee to sit again, and it was ordered that this House do this day se'nnight resolve itself into that Committee.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, February 19.

The Expiring Laws Bill, the Militia Offers Bill, and the Marine Seduction Bill, received the royal assent by commission.

The bill containing regulations to render it unlawful for any person to sell, or expose to sale, wheaten bread, before it is twenty-four hours old, was brought up by Lord Hawkesbury, Mr. Bragge, and others, and read a first time, when

The Earl of LIVERPOOL rose, and said, though he was about to state the second reading of the bill immediately to be of the utmost importance to the country, he was perfectly aware that it was not usual to press the passing of bills of so new and singular a nature through all their stages on one and the same day, and that sometimes an opposition was made to their principle; but on this occasion the House of Commons had concurred in the urgency of the necessity to which the bill applied, and its great probable public utility, if passed without the smallest delay, and had therefore passed it through all its stages that day. Every noble Lord also,

whom he had found an opportunity to consult on the subject, had been so entirely of the same opinion, that he should not hesitate to move, that the other stages of the bill be gone through immediately.

The bill was accordingly read a second time, the Committee negatived, and the bill read a third time, and passed *nemine dissente*, and sent down to the Commons to acquaint that House with the concurrence of the House of Lords.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, February 19.

A message was received from the Lords, requiring the attendance of the Commons, to hear the commission read for His Majesty's assent to several bills. The Speaker having returned, reported, that His Majesty's assent had been given to the act for accepting the services of Militia Corps in Ireland; to the act for the Prevention of the Seduction of His Majesty's Forces; to the act for establishing Courts of Judicature in Newfoundland, and to several private acts.

Leave was given to bring in a bill for making of Wet Docks, and the better accommodation of Shipping in the Port of London.

On the motion for reading the Bakers' Bread Bill the first time,

Mr. NICHOLLS said, that, in his opinion, this bill would fail of answering the intended effect. Farmers, &c. in the country were in the habit of consuming the stale bread. He apprehended this bill would hold out a great alarm, at the same time that other means were in our power. The first of these which he would mention was the stoppage of the corn distillery; and another was to prevent the consumption of oats by horses (making necessary exceptions). He thought also, that much of the barley consumed in the distilleries might answer for the food of man. Adverting to a former debate, Mr. Nicholls denied that he had ever said what had been imputed to him, "that the war was the cause of the scarcity." What he had advanced was, that the continuance of the war deprived us of some of the means of relief. He had observed, that the corn expected from the Baltic and America must come here during the war at a very advanced price. Peace therefore would operate as a bounty for bringing corn from these countries, by diminishing the freight. There were also several parts of the Low

Countries and of Germany where corn would be procured, were it not for the war.

Mr. VANSITTART said, that the remedies which the honourable Member had proposed might be proper; but the present bill would certainly do good as far as it went.

The bill was then read a first and second time, and committed: the period when bakers should be prohibited from selling any other than stale bread which had been baked twenty-four hours, was fixed for the 26th of February in the metropolis and ten miles round, and for the 4th of March for the country;—the penalty for a violation of the law, 5l.; and the bill to continue in force for six weeks after the commencement of the next Session of Parliament.

Mr. JOLLIFFE inquired of the noble Lord, whether the bill was meant to extend to other articles made of flour, besides bread?

Lord HAWKESBURY replied, that he certainly meant that the operation of the bill should extend to all such articles; and expressed a hope, that this regulation would be productive of considerable benefit. He said he had made a calculation in his own family, and he found, that, upon an average, the saving in the article would amount to a bushel of wheat per man for the year.

Mr. LUSHINGTON presented petitions from Messrs. Johnson and Akwell, Grenada merchants, stating, that from various circumstances they were unable to pay up the next instalment of the Exchequer Loan, and praying to be relieved from the said payment. On the motion of Mr. Lushington, the said petitions were referred to the Committee, to whom Mr. M'Dowall's petition was referred.

Mr. WILBERFORCE referred to the debate of last night, and said, that from information which he had since received, he found that very good effects would result from giving a pecuniary bounty for raising of early potatoes. He had learned, that during the scarcity in 1796, when it was reported that a premium was to be allowed for the cultivation of potatoes, Mr. Arthur Young had received several applications from persons willing to set about the cultivation of potatoes. The sum of money which would produce the desired effect was very small, compared with the amount which would be paid by the whole community in the advanced price of this article; nor would it interfere with the production of any other article. Pease was another article, the growth of which ought also to be encouraged. As it was necessary that a quantity of the seed from which potatoes were raised should be immediately secured, he

would therefore move, "That the House resolve itself into a Committee, to consider of the expediency of encouraging the growth of early potatoes."

Lord HAWKESBURY wished the honourable gentleman to postpone his motion for a little, till the Bakers' Prohibitory Bill should pass; which being done, the Bakers' Bill was read a third time, passed, and sent to the Lords.

Mr. WILBERFORCE then renewed his motion with respect to the growth of early potatoes.

Mr. JOLLIFFE said, that he had been a good deal in the habits of agriculture, and thought the motion might be useful. Potatoes he knew to be the best preparation of land for wheat.

Mr. BUXTON said, it was with reluctance he rose seemingly to oppose the honourable gentleman's motion; but he thought it was dangerous that the House should interfere on subjects of agriculture. The price of grain would be the best premium for bringing it to market. He was also afraid that the proposed premium would occasion such a growth of potatoes as to occupy land that might be wanted for other purposes. Agriculture would find its own level.

Lord SHEFFIELD thought there was a risk in planting potatoes thus early, lest a frost should injure them.

Mr. BURDON also objected on the same grounds with Mr. Buxton.

After some farther conversation between Lord SHEFFIELD, Mr. ESTCOURT, and Mr. SHAW LE FEVRE,

Mr. Chancellor PITT rose and said, there appeared to be so much difference of sentiment, that it seemed to him that the subject required some farther investigation. He applauded the zeal of the honourable gentleman who made the motion; and although the difficulty of the country might be over-rated, yet it was the duty of the House to take every proper measure to alleviate any temporary distress; at the same time nothing was more dangerous than to hold out the idea to the Public, as if they depended upon legislative interference and regulation. Such interference, with regard to articles of food, was, in many respects, pernicious. He would recommend it to gentlemen to investigate the subject, to proceed with coolness, and to compare, one with another, the results of their inquiries from different parts of the kingdom, rather than to come to the House and propose their separate ideas; which would rather increase than diminish the danger. He hoped, that whatever gentlemen might have to suggest, they would propose it to the Select

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Committee, and that the honourable mover would himself give the example, and also allow his name to be added to that Committee ; so that, after the most mature investigation, means might be adopted, and adequate remedies applied.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that he did not wish to press his motion. The information he had received and stated had been from the first authority. After vindicating the proceeding of the Board of Agriculture, he expressed his desire to withdraw his motion.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, he had heard no other reason for withdrawing the motion than the wish of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. Chancellor PITT then moved, " That a motion having been made, and a debate arising thereupon, the farther consideration of this motion be adjourned till Tuesday next."

A message was received from the Lords, stating that their Lordships had agreed to the Bakers' Prohibitory Bill.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL moved, " That the Report of the Committee of Secrecy be read." He then moved the second reading of the bill for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

Mr. JOLLIFFE said, it was with much concern he now rose to oppose the motion. When a similar one was made in a former session, a noble Lord had stated that the safety of the country depended upon it ; but no such assertion was now mentioned. He had not, indeed, any apprehension of the suspension being made an ill use of, either by His Majesty's Attorney General, or that noble person to whom the execution of it would be principally entrusted. But the liberty of the subject consisted in the non-existence of a power which might either now, or at any distant period, be employed to bad purposes. He had great objection to the House proceeding immediately to the renewal of this act. At any rate he thought this Suspension Bill ought first to expire, if it were only for a day, rather than that it should be renewed year after year, like the Mutiny or Land Tax Bill, as a matter of course, and thus become a part of the Constitution. He wished gentlemen to consider how this might affect after-generations, if the plea for continuing the suspension should be admitted, that no harm had resulted from it. He complained of what had fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a former debate, as if all who differed from him were to be classed with Jacobins, and as if they had no other object than to pull down Government. He for one disclaimed all such principles and intentions ; he begged therefore to be excused from having such

reflections thrown upon him. It was illiberal to treat gentlemen thus who were doing their duty towards their country. For his part he held the principles of Jacobinism to be most detestable: he knew nothing in hell itself more to be abhorred. He wished therefore to move, "That instead of the word *now*, the second reading of this bill be postponed to this day six weeks."

Mr. H. LASCELLES thought that this subject was of the greatest importance, and ought to receive the fullest discussion. He considered it necessary that the hands of Government should be strengthened: and to such measures as the one under consideration, he was led to attribute the general tranquillity, notwithstanding the efforts used to disturb all civilized order. He saw no reason why the generality of the people, who were well affected, should not be protected from the disaffected. It might as well be argued, that because the generality of the people were honest, there should be no law against robbers. He thought the country was under great obligations to the Executive Government for their vigorous exertions.

Mr. HOBHOUSE followed Mr. H. Lascelles. He said, that he rose to oppose the second reading of this bill, because he had not heard a single argument urged in favour of it, which afforded the least satisfaction to his mind.

The honourable and learned gentleman (the Attorney General) when on a former night he moved for leave to introduce this measure, had scarcely condescended to employ a few words, by way of preface: he had considered this bill as a motion *of course*, and little deserving the attention of the House. In that respect, however, he differed from one of his own friends, like him, a supporter of the present Administration (Mr. H. Lascelles), who thought that no subject more merited discussion, and who wished, that on so serious an occasion the House should be fully attended. That honourable gentleman did not concur with his honourable and learned friend in thinking that the law now proposed was a matter *of course*. The honourable and learned gentleman had not declared, as formerly, that it was *notorious* that a formidable conspiracy now existed to overturn the Constitution, the Religion, and the Laws of the land, and that no gentleman, who in the least degree noticed passing events, could refuse to acknowledge the great and imminent danger to which the country was now exposed. He had prudently avoided that stale and hackneyed topic of the *notoriety* of the peril, because he knew that such a statement was not supported by "experience and the evidence of facts," and would prove to be a mere ill-grounded assertion. The honourable and

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learned gentleman, if he had hinted any thing like argument, seemed to have grounded it on the Report of the Committee of Secrecy, which had been delivered to the House in April 1799, and contended, that there was no difference between that period and the present. A Report from a Committee of Secrecy, selected from gentlemen on both sides of the House, without regard to the politics they entertained, would undoubtedly have great weight upon his (Mr. Hobhouse's) mind, and tend very much to influence his decision. He did not mean to say any thing disrespectful of that Committee; but he thought, if without offence he might speak freely, that the fears with which those gentlemen had been seized, that the alarm which had gained possession of their minds, had contributed, in a strong degree, to mislead their judgment. A Report less sustained by the documents which had been given by way of Appendix, he had never seen. But he would not enter upon that subject, lest he should be led into too great length, and take up too much of the time of the House. One passage only of that Report would he beg leave to notice, from which it would appear that, taking the opinion of that Committee to be well founded, there was certainly some difference between the circumstances of April 1799, and February 1800. That Committee had said, "The utmost diligence is still employed in endeavouring, not only to sustain and revive those societies whose seditious and treasonable purposes long since attracted the notice of Parliament, but to extend their correspondence to every part of this kingdom, to Ireland, to France, and to those places on the Continent where French emissaries are established, and to institute new societies, formed precisely on the same plan, and directed by the same object." "Now, Sir, who will pretend to say (said Mr. Hobhouse) that Government has been less vigilant in hunting out conspirators and detecting plots, that it has employed a less number of spies and informers, or that its police has, in the smallest degree, relaxed, since the month of April 1799? If this then cannot be imagined, and if no more than two persons have been arrested, under the present Suspension Act, during the course of the last eight months, can any gentleman believe that exertions of the strongest kind are now made to invigorate old societies of a seditious nature, to institute new, and to carry on a traitorous correspondence with the enemy? How then do the present circumstances at all agree with the representation of the Committee in April 1799?" Another important difference, Mr. Hobhouse said, ought not to be passed over in silence. Since the delivery of that Report, upon which, according to the Attorney General, who had now moved it to be laid upon

the table, the hinge of the present question seemed to turn, the Executive had been armed with fresh strength, and increased power. In addition to the Treason Act, introduced in January 1796, which multiplied the numbers of that offence; in addition to the Sedition Act passed at the same time, which almost reduced to a nullity the right of the people publicly to assemble and discuss political subjects; in addition to two acts, which received the sanction of Parliament in the year 1797, the one inflicting heavy penalties on the guilt of inciting any of His Majesty's forces by sea or land to mutiny, the other for more effectually preventing the administering, or taking of unlawful oaths; in addition to those several methods of increasing ministerial power, the strongest laws had been adopted. A brand was fixed upon the door of every house, where "the pestilential breath of Jacobinism," according to the eloquent language of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on another occasion, had found an entrance; every person belonging to the Corresponding, Constitutional, or any such society, was rendered liable to fine, imprisonment, nay, to transportation; and the door was now completely shut against all debating societies, and even against all clubs, where any pecuniary consideration was given for admission. If coercion could accomplish its object, the laws were already sufficiently severe for every fair purpose which Government could desire. Mr. Hobhouse thought that the views he had taken must surely satisfy every unbiassed mind, that since April 1799, taking it for granted that the alarming account of the Secret Committee was exact in every particular, the state of circumstances was widely altered.

Mr. Hobhouse then adverted to another argument, used by a right honourable gentleman (the Secretary of War) in a former debate, and repeated this night by the honourable gentleman who spoke last, namely, that the danger was considerably diminished, and that the present tranquillity was to be ascribed to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. Both those gentlemen had said, that if the suspension were not continued, the traitors, should France once more become successful, would shew themselves in full force, and with renewed activity; and, in the language of one of them, a revolution might burst forth as suddenly, as characters inscribed with lemon-juice upon paper, started into appearance upon being applied to the fire. This argument, Mr. Hobhouse observed, was a little at variance with the former: *That* supposed the ground for alarm to be as strong, as when the panic-struck Committee made their Report; *this* gave a more favourable representation of the present times. But it was curious to contemplate both those modes of

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reasoning in a connected point of view. Upon appearance of danger, the liberties of the subject must be suspended; upon disappearance of the peril, the same arbitrary powers must be placed in the hands of Ministers; and thus, whether the State were, or were not, exposed to risque, an individual might be committed under a warrant from the Privy Council, or Secretary of State, and denied the privilege of demanding his trial within a given time. "Farewell then, an eternal farewell, to the blessings of that great charter of our personal freedom, the *Habeas Corpus Act*!"—["Hear! Hear!" from the Opposition Bench.] It should also be remarked, that this argument was not quite consistent with itself. It assumed that the danger was diminished, and yet supposed that it was only concealed, which, in fact, rendered it more formidable. Traitors, but for the measure now recommended, it was said, would no longer lurk in their hiding places, but, on the first favourable opportunity, make the most daring exertions to accomplish the ruin of their country. What was this, but to contend that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act had produced only a hollow and delusive quiet, which was rather the suppression of murmur and complaint, than a proof of content and happiness? Was not this a strange method of demonstrating its efficacy?

Another argument which had been brought forward originated in fears of French Jacobinism. Those destructive principles, it was observed by an honourable gentleman on a former night (Mr. Buxton), were still prevalent in France, and attempts had been, and would again be made, to spread the poison in this country: nay, the minds of some Englishmen had already taken the taint. Mr. Hobhouse here begged leave to remind the honourable gentleman of the time when Jacobinism did not seem to be armed with such strong terrors. Did the dread of French principles restrain His Majesty's Ministers from offering three several times to negotiate with Jacobin France, when she laboured to excite anarchy in foreign countries, and, through lust of dominion, aimed at the most extensive conquests? It had been said by a right honourable gentleman in a former debate (the Secretary at War), that it was in the highest degree essential, in considering whether the overtures of an enemy should be received, to attend to the personal character of the Chief Ruler, which, if so depraved as that of General Bonaparte, ought to bar the door against negotiation. Mr. Hobhouse desired to bring to the recollection of the right honourable gentleman, that he and his colleagues in office had solicited peace from men, whom they had often and loudly reprobated for the murder of their Sovereign. The character of those regicides, though so constantly represented,

in the bitterest terms of execration, as the vilest and basest of mankind, did not stand in the way of an offer to negotiate on the part of this country; though the *character* of the Chief Consul would not now permit us even to listen to any terms of pacification. But, Mr. Hobhouse added, it was rather too much to assume, that Jacobinism was still prevalent in France. If he understood the nature of the last Revolution, it was this: The power of Bonaparte rose upon the destruction of the Jacobin ascendancy. The Jacobins had a superiority in the Council of Five Hundred. That Council, urged by the most ambitious views, had passed a resolution, declaring that France would never make a peace at the expence of any of those territories which now made a part of the Republic one and indivisible. That resolution the Council of Ancients, inclined to moderation, and stimulated by a love of peace, had refused to ratify. With the Council of Ancients Bonaparte had co-operated to effect the overthrow of the Jacobinical influence in the other Council; and in that point he had completely succeeded, for in the new Government he had reduced that Legislative body to a practical non-entity. Was it not then the interest of Bonaparte to keep the Jacobins, who owed their fall to his elevation, in the lowest state of subjection? Nay, the Jacobins, whose numbers were now comparatively few, were justly detested by the rest of the French nation; and hence also it was incumbent upon Bonaparte, who wished so much to recommend himself to the people, to neglect no measure which tended to prevent the revival of Jacobinical authority. But, notwithstanding these facts were so obvious, an honourable gentleman (Mr. Canning) had, in a former debate, positively asserted, that Bonaparte was a concealed Jacobin. How did this appear? It was one of the principles of Jacobinism to spread war and desolation among other nations, and to attempt the subversion of the most antient Monarchies. Did Bonaparte prove himself to be a Jacobin, because he had made overtures of peace to this country, and though they had been proudly and disdainfully rejected, had, without returning insult for insult, invited negotiation a second time? But should it be admitted that the destructive principles of Jacobinism were still predominant in France, and had infected the minds of some persons in our own nation, ought coercion to be employed as a remedy? Had force ever been found to check the propagation of any tenet, however pernicious it might have been deemed? Quite the reverse. Resistance and opposition, instead of impeding, accelerated the progress of opinions. Would it not then be better, would it not be wiser, to attack the baneful principles of Jacobinism, by reforming abuses, by addressing the under-

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standing and good sense of the people, and shewing them that the genuine British Constitution afforded more blessings, than could be enjoyed under any other form of Government? Such a method would prove an infinitely more effectual guard against the inroads of Jacobinical reformation, than an appeal to the God of battles.

Mr. Hobhouse then proceeded to comment upon another argument, by which an attempt had been made to justify this bill. He alluded to what had fallen from an honourable gentleman on a former night (Mr. Wilberforce), who had contended that it was our duty to *confide* in Administration. His Majesty's Ministers, he had said, might have intelligence of evil and traitorous designs, which, consistently with the public safety, could not be made known to the House; that we ought, on that account, to place implicit faith in their assertions, and make them responsible, if they abused their powers. This doctrine of *confidence* in Administration was, Mr. Hobhouse observed, extremely convenient, and almost of universal application. If a strong measure, like the present, were proposed, a measure subjecting the personal liberty of every individual to the will and caprice of a Minister, no evidence of its necessity was to be given, because the communication might be dangerous: if inquiry were demanded into the causes of the failure of an expedition, the ill success of which had been pronounced to be *discreditable* by an honourable Baronet who had been employed in that service, and had behaved most gallantly (Sir J. M. Pulteney), the answer was, the motion could not be granted, because the safety of some individuals would be exposed, and the instructions of the officers who commanded might have been discretionary. But supposing that, in some instances, it might be attended with detriment, either to individuals or the public, to communicate to the House all the intelligence which Ministers might have received, still it was unnecessary to resort to this doctrine of *confidence*. A Secret Committee, fairly and impartially chosen out of gentlemen on both sides of the House, might be appointed to examine into the grounds for suspecting that a conspiracy against the State was in existence, and their report would prove completely satisfactory, though any part of their information were withholden from the House. Such a proceeding would be far preferable to a blind and implicit faith in His Majesty's Ministers. But it became the House, before they came to a determination, to inquire, whether Ministers were deserving of the *confidence* which the honourable gentleman was so willing to repose in them. Was not their whole conduct a system of raising false alarms, and exciting groundless panics, with a view to acquire continued accessions of power? Had they not, at the close of the year

1792, suddenly embodied the militia, fortified the Tower, and thrown the whole country into a state of consternation, upon the idea that a formidable conspiracy was upon the point of breaking forth, and that the palace, or the bank of England, would shortly be attacked by an immense body of traitors? And what did this appear to be? Nothing but a trifling riot, at a few places in England and Scotland, among the labourers, for an advance in their wages. Had they not, in the Spring of 1794, publicly announced, that certain political Societies were engaged in traitorous plots against the Constitution, the Religion, and the Laws of their country? Many persons, said to be leaders in those societies, were soon afterwards arrested upon a charge of High Treason. They were all put upon their trials, and uniformly acquitted. But it was the fashion to call them "acquitted felons," and to insist that the verdict of the Jury did not establish their innocence. Certainly a case might be imagined, in which a general impression of the guilt of a party might pervade the minds of the whole Court, though, for want of some particular which the law required, a verdict of *not guilty* could not be avoided. But was any such defect discoverable in these trials? Far otherwise. Had not Government taken the greatest pains to probe the conspiracy to the very bottom? Had they not subpoena'd upon each trial from 140 to 150 witnesses? Were they not assisted by the greatest professional skill and acuteness? Was it at all probable then that any legal omission had taken place? It could not be. Nay, he was thoroughly persuaded that it was impossible for any gentleman, of a fair and unbiassed mind, to read a faithful transcript of the evidence, without rising from his seat with a perfect conviction that the verdict of the Jury was a willing verdict, and a full exculpation of the accused—[A cry of "Hear! Hear!"] Had not the Administration, towards the end of the year 1795, pursued the same line of conduct? At that period a shameful and highly criminal outrage was committed upon the person of our most gracious Sovereign, an outrage, the very recital of which excited the strongest feelings of horror. This act of a mere individual, Ministers had, without the least shadow of proof, imputed to the Corresponding Society, and took an early occasion to introduce the Treason and Sedition Bills to which he had before alluded, and the latter of which he considered as the severest blow which the Constitution of England had ever received. To grasp at illegitimate power by a system of terror, was a leading feature in the proceedings of the present Administration. In such gentlemen he, for one, could place no confidence. It would be proper also to investigate how those arbitrary powers, which they now wished to be continued so

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them, had been exercised. The bill, suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, empowered the Privy Council and Secretary of State to detain persons after commitment, without suffering them to claim their usual privilege of *habeas corpus*; but it gave no authority to commit without information upon oath, or having recourse to those forms which were required before a common Magistrate. Were not many, he asked, sent to prison upon suspicion, on the mere warrant of the Privy Council or Secretary of State, without any affidavit having been lodged against them, without knowing what were the facts upon which the charge against them was grounded? Was not this a gross violation of the law of the land? Was it not a flagrant transgression against the very act, the powers of which they now wanted to renew? For such conduct Ministers must, at a future day, come down to the House, and pray for a bill of indemnity to shelter themselves against the punishment which they so justly merited. He begged also to animadvert upon the treatment which many of the prisoners had received, after having been thus illegally committed. His honourable friend (Sir F. Burdett) had the other night described, in forcible, but true colours, the small stone cell into which Colonel Despard had been thrown; a cell without fire-place, chair, or table, and which admitted no light, without, at the same time, giving an entrance to the wind and the rain. Was this a proper place of confinement, he would not say for a gentleman of such rank in the army, but for any person, previously to conviction? Was it right to inflict the same kind of imprisonment upon those whom the law presumed to be innocent, and those on whom sentence of death had been pronounced? This was precisely the case; for there was not the least difference between the cells of Colonel Despard and the other state-prisoners, as they were called, and those of the seamen who had been capitally convicted of mutiny. His honourable friend had also mentioned the hardships endured by the Manchester prisoners on their journey from that place to Cold Bath Fields: but he had forgotten to state the nature of their lodging on the first night of their arrival. They were turned into a cold, damp room, with a stone floor, without a fire-place, and without bed, and could not have lain themselves down but for a quantity of dried oakum, which by accident had been there deposited. As gentlemen seemed to doubt, Mr. Hobhouse desired to read an extract from the Report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the state of the prison in Cold Bath Fields, of which Committee he had the honour of being a member. He professed great respect for the several gentlemen composing that Committee, notwithstanding he had differed from them in opinion upon some

very material points. They, he was certain, would well remember the following evidence. Some of the questions were put by himself.

"Did you (addressed to Mr. Aris the governor, or jailor) put the Manchester prisoners into separate cells, or into one room?"

"*Aris.* I put them into one room the first night."

"Had they any beds to lie upon?"

"*Aris.* They had no beds to lie upon the first night."

"Was there any fire in the room?"

"*Aris.* There was not."

"Was there any thing in that room that the Manchester people could sleep upon the first night they were confined?"

"*Aris.* I think about two tons of dried oakum."

That the room had a stone floor, and was cold and damp, he (Mr. Hobhouse) would take upon himself to assert, because he had seen and examined it. Could such rigorous treatment be justified? Was it consistent with that lenity and tenderness due to men who were legally considered to be guiltless? So much for the habitation of the state prisoners; but now with respect to their food. The jail-allowance to convicts at Clerkenwell prison was meat and broth three days in the week, and bread and water the remaining four. To other prisoners, not convicts, bread and water was the only allotted sustenance. In support of this statement, he quoted the answer to a question addressed to Mr. Aris.

"How long was it before Colonel Despard became entitled to the prison allowance?"

"*Aris.* No person is entitled to the county-allowance, bread excepted, but those who are convicted."

Was not the situation of Colonel Despard, and many others, men who had never been brought to trial, inferior, in point of diet, to the regulated food of convicts? Bread and water, but for any supply which kindness or humanity might furnish, must have been their only sustenance. He appealed to the feelings of the House, whether such proceedings were agreeable to the mild genius of the English Constitution—[A cry of "Hear! Hear! Hear!" from the Opposition]. He was aware, and ready to admit, that Government had afterwards alleviated the condition of the prisoners to whom he alluded, and thus recorded a confession of their former criminal negligence. The Manchester people were committed in March 1798, and Colonel Despard in the April following. From those respective periods to the 9th of June of the same year, when Government ordered an allowance of 13s. 4d. per week to each of the state-prisoners, bread and water were the only sustenance allowed

by the rules of the prison. If it were said that the interval of rigour was not very long, what would gentlemen say when they heard that those state-prisoners were kept in the stone-cells, the horrid abodes before mentioned, until the 25th of November 1798, at which time a public direction was given that they should be removed to some apartments in the prison? Colonel Despard then was seven months, and the Manchester people eight months, in the dreadful habitation which was first assigned to them. When Government took the case of these persons into consideration, appointed rooms for them, and granted an adequate allowance for food, there was no longer, Mr. Hobhouse thought, any ground of complaint; but he should ever be of opinion, that it was a highly-culpable neglect of duty in those, to whom such extensive powers had been entrusted under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, not to have inquired, before they ordered the commitment, what were the several places of confinement within the prison, and what were the regulations respecting maintenance. Had they been duly impressed with the idea that accusations were not proofs, and that every comfort, consistent with safe detention, ought to be administered until a verdict of *guilty* had been pronounced, they would have taken care that the original situation of these prisoners had stood in need of no amelioration. But there was another point of view, in which it appeared that Government had misused the powers which had been confided to them. It might be proper, for the sake of defeating the machinations of men suspected of conspiring against the State, to arrest their persons, and confine them until the plot was unravelled, until the nature and object of the conspiracy were understood. "Look at the document upon your table," said Mr. Hobhouse; "some of the prisoners have been in custody nearly two years. Might you not, long before this time, have discovered the plans of the traitors, and what share of the guilt belonged to those whom you have committed to prison? Undoubtedly you might. Have not the prisoners then, who have been thus long detained, a right, in point of justice, to say, Bring us to our trial; put us to the bar of our country; if our guilt be established, let us suffer the punishment which the law has annexed to our crime; if not, grant us our liberation. As to compensation for our long and severe sufferings, you can make us none. This language they may, with the strictest propriety, use; their long detention can only be considered as a punishment, without even the form of a trial."

Mr. Hobhouse said, that he had now reviewed all the arguments which had been advanced in support of the bill; he had heard no

case made out; he had heard nothing tending to prove an emergency which lay beyond the reach of the other existing laws: he therefore could not conscientiously vote for continuing the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

He felt that he had trespassed long upon the time of the House—[A general cry of "Hear! Hear!"]—but he could not help advert, before he sat down, to the time when this measure was introduced to the House. It had been said by the gentlemen on the other side, that the Ministry had "the most glorious majorities" within the walls of Parliament; that the whole nation approved of their conduct, except "the miserable remnant of Opposition now in the House;" that all Europe admired, and beheld with delight, their firm and manly perseverance in prosecuting this just and necessary war against France; was this then the time to bring forward strong measures against disaffection, to remove the great bulwark against Ministerial oppression, and to suspend the Constitution, as far as the personal security of every individual was concerned?

"I have, Sir," said Mr. Hobhouse, "discharged a most painful duty in opposing the general sense of the House. I know that I expose myself to obloquy. An honourable gentleman the other night, departing from his usual liberality (Mr. Buxton), accused me, and the other gentlemen with whom I have the honour to agree in opinion, of having so frequently asserted that the war was carried on for the purpose of restoring the House of Bourbon, not because we believed what we affirmed, but because we wished to excite the country to join in petitions for peace. After having heard this very uncandid remark, I expect that I shall be called a Jacobin for the sentiments I have delivered this evening. I feel, Sir, that I am actuated by none but honourable and patriotic motives; and this is the only answer that I shall ever give to such groundless imputations."

Mr. STURGES said he was not so much surprised that gentlemen who had originally opposed this measure should now resist its continuance, as that they should expect others to renounce the opinions they had deliberately formed, and abandon the precautions they had wisely taken. Such an expectation, however, was formed on the late change which had taken place in France, which the honourable gentleman contended had destroyed Jacobinism, and with it the danger of its principles. But the effect of those principles he contended was not so easily to be removed. The French Revolution was unlike others, by which the person of a Governor, or even the form of a Government had been altered, which were calculated,

perhaps, to remove a local evil or produce a local advantage, and were therefore local and partial only in their effects; but being a revolution in the opinions, doctrines, and principles by which *all* governments were held together, and the frame of social order cemented—which cannot be true in France and false in England, salutary in the one, and pernicious in the other; its effect was as general as its nature. It created in every state which was within its reach profelytes devoted to the authors of their creed, and professors of their faith abroad, more attached, therefore, to a foreign country than their own, and actuated by motives which became paramount to the duties of allegiance, and the obligations of natural patriotism. Hence had proceeded those professions of an enlarged patriotism too extensive for the narrow limits of our own island. Hence the numerous acts of these sectaries from the addresses of their affiliated societies to the French Convention, in September 1792, after the deposition of the King, down to the last communication between the Executive Directory of England, and the Executive Directory of France. Let it be considered of what description of persons these sects were composed. They were of two classes (in neither of which could he be suspected of meaning to include the honourable gentleman or those near him). First, of those who from their birth, habits, and situation, must be ever ignorant of these subjects on which they are called to decide, but were deluded by the art and knavery of others, of whom they become the blind and servile instruments. Secondly, of the indigent and ambitious, seeking property which they did not possess, and power which they did not enjoy, without being very scrupulous as to the means by which either might be obtained. On which of these was it that the last revolution was to have a beneficial effect? Not surely on the ignorant, who were unable to judge of its tendency, and acted in obedience to their leaders—not surely on the ambitious, unless the acquisition of unbounded power, by revolutionary means, be a discouragement to rebellion, and successful usurpation the best antidote to treason.

The honourable gentleman had stated that General Bonaparte had suppressed Jacobinism, and renounced the system of conquest which made it formidable. He did not mean to enter into a consideration of the character of the present Ruler of France, which they had been recommended to treat with so much delicacy, but would only remind the House, that in the many countries which he had conquered, he had imposed, in the true spirit of these principles, that very constitution to which he had himself sworn allegiance, but which he had afterwards destroyed.

If the House should be of opinion that such principles, from their nature, were not easily to be eradicated, and that the late revolution, for the reasons he had taken the liberty of stating, had not changed their nature or effect, it remained only to consider the other arguments which had been urged against the bill. One honourable gentleman (Mr. Joliffe), who wished that this act might be suffered to expire before it should be renewed, had observed that an interval had existed between the two first years when it was in force, and the two last. The House would recollect that in that very interval the treason was committed which produced the trial at Maidstone. If the act had been then proposed to have been continued, the House would probably have been told that the measure was unnecessary, because treason had no existence. The honourable gentleman who spoke last had objected to the degree of confidence which was to be given to His Majesty's Ministers. That confidence undoubtedly was considerable, and it would be given with more or less caution, in proportion as it was more or less likely to be abused. Of this they were enabled to judge from the past conduct of Government. If the list on the table were referred to, it would be impossible for the ingenuity of the honourable gentleman, it would be impossible for malignity itself, if it were employed on such a subject, to attribute the commitment of those in custody to any other motive than a consideration for the public security. They were persons who, while they adhered to the laws and constitution, could neither personally nor politically be objects of jealousy or alarm to His Majesty's Ministers, to whom they were perfectly unknown. The power given by the bill had been used with a degree of moderation (two persons only having been committed since the passing of the last act), that proved, in the honourable gentleman's opinion, the measure to be unnecessary. It did, however, afford the most satisfactory assurance that the power would not be abused if it were still reposed in the same hands. With regard to the treatment of the prisoners, to which allusion had been made, it was unnecessary to discuss a subject which had already been so fully considered by a Committee, and the House, in the last sessions; and he was happy that the honourable gentleman had acknowledged that they were now properly treated, their grievances, if they existed, having been redressed as soon as they were known. It is still, however, said, that the confinement of persons for eighteen months without trial, is new, and contrary to the practice of the Constitution. He would not trouble the House by detailing the different instances in which the Habeas Corpus Act had been suspended, and the comparative necessity for it at each period, but only call to their recollection

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tion one of those events which proved that the best government, administered by the best men, might be endangered by the weakest of its subjects. He alluded to the conspiracy against the life of King William; for which some persons were brought to trial, and many others imprisoned. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended; but that was not enough: a power was given to His Majesty to continue those who had not been tried, in custody, at first from year to year, at length during his pleasure. That pleasure continued during His Majesty's life. On his demise the danger arising from a conspiracy against his person was not considered as extinct, and the same power was given to Queen Anne. Their imprisonment continued during the whole of her reign; and on the accession of the present illustrious House a similar act was passed, which was again renewed on the accession of his late Majesty King George II. and the last survivor of these unfortunate persons (whose name was Bernardi) died in Newgate, in the year 1736, at the age of 82, after an imprisonment of 40 years, without any allowance from government. He mentioned this case, not to applaud it, far from it, but for the purpose of shewing what was the practice which had been referred to in the best times, from the period when the seals were in the hands of Lord Somers, till they were placed in those of Lord Hardwicke. It was not such power which was now solicited, or which they were about to give. Thinking the cause had not ceased to operate which made this measure of precaution unnecessary, that the power given had not been abused, and that it had produced the security we enjoyed, he should vote for the second reading of the bill.

Sir FRANCIS BURDETT opposed the second reading of the bill. He said that much declamation was used against the Jacobin principles of France; and if it was on account of the injustice and atrocity which they had caused to be committed, he opposed ministry on the same grounds, as it was their Jacobinical principles that he held in abhorrence; for never was there greater injustice than they had displayed in their conduct. He agreed that the principles of government are common to all countries; and if injustice constituted Jacobinism in France, it also constituted Jacobinism in England. He then entered into a detail of the different periods at which the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act had been voted since 1794, and the different grounds on which it had been voted at these different periods; and, from the review, argued the injustice and inconsistency of the conduct of Ministers. He thought it would be better to repeal the Habeas Corpus Act altogether, than thus continually to vote its suspension; and this opinion he did not en-

tain without strong reasons ; for the repeal would not change the law of the land, as the suspension did. The Habeas Corpus in common law would still remain, which it did not now do. He concluded with asserting, that there was no part of the Constitution which Ministers had not violated, and that they had left to the country nothing of the Constitution but its corruptions.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, that he rose on the present occasion, because it had been imputed to him, that he seemed by his conduct to consider the passing of the present bill as a matter of course. He certainly did not consider it in any such light, nor did he think that his conduct authorised any such imputation. He gave notice a considerable time before of his intention to make the motion, that gentlemen might be ready who were disposed to make objections to the measure. When he introduced the bill, he stated the reasons which he conceived justified him in proposing it, namely, That a Secret Committee of the House had been appointed from among the Members of the House ; that this Committee, after a most laborious inquiry, gave in a Report on the 6th of March last, which he did not detail, indeed, because he thought it unnecessary to take up the time of the House by detailing what was either fresh in every gentleman's memory, or what was open to their inspection. This Report the House had formerly thought sufficient to authorize the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act ; and he only had thought it necessary farther to state, that subsequent to that Report being given in, and to the act which was passed in May last for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, there was no evidence of any change having taken place sufficient to authorize its now being admitted to be in force. An honourable gentleman had proposed to put off the second reading of the bill for six weeks. He was convinced that he had not recollected that this would defeat the whole object of the measure. The present Act of Suspension will expire on the first of March ; it is therefore of consequence that a new one should be passed as soon as possible, or the delay would have the effect of liberating persons whom he was convinced no gentleman wished to see liberated ; it would have the effect of liberating those men who had been brought from Ireland, and were now in confinement in Scotland—" There are only two points to be considered in the present question, first, Whether the Suspension is necessary ? and second, Whether it is safe to entrust such additional power to Ministers ? The necessity of the Suspension is proved by the Report above referred to. In the very first page of the Report, it is stated by the Committee, that in the whole course of the inquiry they had found the clearest proof of a systematic design and plan to

overthrow the whole Constitution and Laws of the Country, and to dissolve the connection between Great Britain and Ireland. Is this true or false? Those gentlemen who believe it to be true, will act upon it; for there is no evidence of a change having taken place since the 15th of March, when the Report was made: those who think it false, are such gentlemen as I will not attempt to reason with; for I see no probability of conveying conviction to the minds of men who would not give credit to a Report drawn up from authentic documents, by a most respectable Committee of that House; and indeed the whole of their opinions are so inconsistent with those which I entertain, that I scarcely knew any common and allowed principle which I could adopt as the ground of an argument addressed to them." The Attorney General then adverted to the same arguments which had been used by Mr. Sturges, from the precedent in the reign of King William, and from the character of the persons who were concerned in the conspiracy which the Committee had detected; and concluded, from the latter consideration, that it was the more necessary that Government should be vested with a power which might enable them to frustrate the designs of men who could not be acted upon by other means, because they are not influenced by principle, or regulated by any of the ties which, in ordinary cases, tend to cement society, and to secure social order. "The second question is, whether such power may be safely entrusted in the hands of His Majesty's Ministers? The list of the persons at present in confinement, will shew that in times past they have not abused it. The only apprehension which can be formed on this point is, that they should exercise this power against the adversaries of their measures, their opponents in Parliament, or the enemies of their authority. But the character of the men in confinement is certainly very different from that of any of these classes; and when their character is considered, it is impossible to suppose that the Secretary of State, in issuing his warrant for their apprehension, could be influenced by any other motive than a regard to the public security and tranquillity. Since the Act of Suspension of the Habeas Corpus which is now in force was passed, only two, or at most three, have been apprehended, and kept in custody. The first of these, who, in point of fact, was apprehended before the act passed, is a Swedish Baron. Surely there is nothing in the character of a Swedish Baron which can induce gentlemen to believe that Ministers, in causing him to be committed to custody, could be actuated by any personal motives, or by any motives but a regard to the public weal. The other two are, one an American, the other an Irishman, in situations so obscure, that from their apprehension no com-

plaint can possibly be made against the exercise of the power vested in Ministry. Beside all this, there is the evidence of the Committee of Secrecy in favour of the manner in which this power had been exercised, and also in favour of the passing of the present bill. In almost every page of their Report, they attribute the safety of the country to what Government had done in consequence of the power which the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus had put in their hands, approve the use which they had made of it, and insist upon the necessity of its being continued." On these grounds the honourable and learned gentleman thought that it had been sufficient to refer to the Report of the Committee; and he did not think it at all disrespectful to the House to have made this reference, because he thought that that Report contained sufficient ground for the adoption of the bill which he had introduced, nor would he now have taken up so much of the time of the House had this disrespect not been imputed to him.

Mr. MARTIN said a few words upon the question, in which he expressed a wish to know, if upon a supposition which he did not conceive to be an impossible case, that the perfect innocence of any of the persons at present in custody were clearly established, any compensation would be made them for their long confinement.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that after all the defence which the Attorney General had made of his conduct, he had heard nothing which either exculpated him to the House, or defended this bill which he had introduced. Certainly from the manner in which the bill had been introduced, it had the appearance that the honourable and learned gentleman considered it as a matter of course; and he thought it worthy of gentlemen's remembrance, that the grounds for the adoption of this bill are not stated till its second reading. He thought that respect for the House, and some little regard for the consciences of those gentlemen who voted with him, would have induced the learned gentleman to give them some reasons why such a bill was necessary, and ought to be adopted. But he called them first to vote for the first reading of the bill, and then, when the question of the second reading comes to be debated, the reasons for both votes are stated. Such conduct was not surely very respectful to the House. Was there ever an occasion before on which Parliament were called, without any reasons being stated, to vote for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus, or to vote any bill which implied such a large suspension of our liberties? If gentlemen would keep away from their own conduct, he would defy them to produce a precedent of such conduct from the whole detail of par-

liamentary proceedings. If there was such a precedent, it might easily be found; let it be produced, only gentlemen must not quote from themselves. Now, therefore, the reasons were given. It had been said that the Report of the Secret Committee contained these reasons, and it had been thought sufficient to refer to it. But a mere reference was not sufficient; the regular parliamentary proceeding was to have referred the papers anew to a Committee, and to have got a new Report. "But even this Report, which has been referred to, contains a direct argument against the present measure; for, after stating all the circumstances, it adds as the opinion of the Committee upon these circumstances, that it would be right and expedient to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act till the first of March 1800. But there is no mention that this Suspension ought to be continued for a longer time; on the contrary, from a specified time being mentioned, it is fair to infer, that in the opinion of the Committee no longer Suspension would be necessary." He did not wish to express any disrespect for the gentlemen who composed that Committee. He would allow for the present, that their Report was wise and prudent in every respect; but it surely would be hard upon these gentlemen to say, that in an unguarded moment they have in their Report stated, that there were grounds which sanctioned, and would for ever sanction a Suspension of the Habeas Corpus. Yet this is said by those gentlemen who make a Report, which could only be intended to sanction the Suspension of that Act for a limited time which is specified by the Report itself, the ground of its farther Suspension now. He did not mean to impute, nor was he willing to suspect any abuse of the power which this Suspension gave to Ministry. "But, without supposing any designed abuse of this power, may they not have been deceived into an improper exercise of it? How can they prove that some of these unfortunate men, whom they have now in custody, were not falsely accused by some understrapper of the same rank with themselves?" He would again ask the question, to which, when he had put it on former occasions, he had never received any satisfactory answer, Whether some of these men had not been apprehended and committed to custody without an information on oath? He had formerly voted on one occasion for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus. This he had done, laying aside all party motives, because he thought the circumstances of the country authorised such a measure; and the mere Suspension of the Act does not invest Ministers with such an extensive power as some people apprehend. But he did not then suspect that any person was ever taken into custody without an information on oath. "If such things are now done—if such a

practice prevails, what justification can any man make to his country for voting for a Suspension of the Habeas Corpus?" Every man may say to me, "You have given away my liberties—I have no resource against malevolence or persecution; every man has it in his power to indulge and gratify his hatred, or his revenge, by a false accusation, which will deprive me of my liberty." If such are the evils which arise from using informations not given on oath, why will not gentlemen answer this question, Whether any of the men now in custody were committed on such informations? If they were, Ministers *have* abused, grossly abused the powers entrusted to them; they have exercised it cruelly, and with barbarity. These men have been kept in custody, some of them now two years. Will there be no end to their sufferings? Will an opportunity never be granted them to stand their trial before their country? As to the treatment of these men, it has been said, that any ill treatment was redressed as soon as it was known; but this will not remedy previous ill treatment; and if men, deprived of their liberty, are treated ill one moment, the power committed to Ministers is grossly abused, and the spirit of the laws of this country grossly violated. Ought Ministers to commit such men to the care of Bow-street runners, to be treated with the mercy which they dispense? If they do, they abuse their power; and it is not sufficient to these men, that, perhaps, after six months misery and wretchedness, their treatment is a little meliorated." It was upon these grounds that the honourable gentleman thought he should act unwarrantably in voting for the farther Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and if, after this night's debate, it was suspended, he saw no prospect of its protection ever being restored to the country. If the House, in such circumstances, should vote the Suspension, he would wash his hands of the transaction, and console himself with the thought that he had borne his testimony against the deed.

Lord BELGRAVE said he was sure that it was in common with the House that he had heard with great pleasure the speech of an honourable gentleman (Mr. Sturges), who had, for the first time, delivered his sentiments, and that from the able speeches generally he had heard in support of the motion, particularly from his learned friend, the Attorney General, he should trouble the House but shortly in noticing some of the arguments that had been urged against the measure.

The honourable gentleman (Mr. Tierney), who had just sat down, had imputed to his learned friend, that he did not go sufficiently, on a former evening, into the reasons that could justify his claim to an assent to his motion, yet the honourable gentleman ad-

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mits the grounds of the Report of last year : on these grounds his learned friend had rested his motion on opening it, and had again rested his arguments this evening on those grounds only more in detail. The honourable gentleman (Mr. Tierney), however, thought, that a Select Committee was again necessary before the House could proceed. Here he wished to remind the honourable gentleman, that when, in a former year, he (Mr. Tierney) voted for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, he did so, not on the Report of the Secret Committee, but, as he said, on the declaration of a Grand Jury. The question, however, of this night, rested on two grounds : First, on the necessity of the measure, both external and internal, and then on the opinion the House entertained of the persons in power : if, indeed, the House entertained any doubts as to the propriety of the conduct of Ministers, they should petition His Majesty to remove them, to make way for the suspension of the act ; of the necessity of which suspension, France, Ireland, and this country, yielded sufficient proof. The Committee of last year was of opinion, that the dangers were great and alarming ; and surely no man could say that these dangers had so far disappeared as to render precaution unnecessary : if we had not the proof, it surely could not be supposed that Ireland, which had been in a state of insurrection from one end to the other, could have been so, without the infection, in some degree, reaching this country. But let gentlemen look to an address of the London Corresponding Society of 1798, inserted in the report of last year, in which they will find these expressions, “ we have not yet ceased from our exertions ; *we* have persevered, and *we* will persevere ;” and again, “ *we* trust we shall not be found inferior in virtue to the people of England.” Now I ask whether, under such views, and against such threats, we should not be upon our guard ? The spirit of disaffection was still strong in certain evil-minded persons, and we should use every possible means to prevent its diffusion.

The present situation of France was to him a strong argument for the continuation of the suspension. France was the thermometer of disaffection here ; as she was victorious it rose, as she was unsuccessful it fell in this country. From the relative situation of the two countries, the greater was the danger to be apprehended from the mischievous powers of Jacobinism. It had been said, if the situation of France is to be considered as an argument for suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, whenever any country in hostility with this is in a state of revolution, you must suspend this act ; according to which, if Algiers or Tunis, Arabia or Turkey were in hostility with us, and in a state of revolution, we were therefore equally

justified in suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, as we now are justified in urging the situation of France as a strong reason, combined with others, for suspending it for the present. This he thought pushing the argument pretty far, considering the geographical situation of the two countries, and the subtle poison of Jacobin arts. To endeavour to reason with an honourable Baronet (Sir Francis Burdett), who sees nothing but liberty in Jacobinism, and nothing but slavery in the British Constitution, would be fruitless; but an honourable gentleman, who preceded him, seemed to think that Jacobinism was destroyed by Bonaparte. Happily for the world Jacobinism has lost much of its power to do mischief in the course of this great contest, for it has lost all those who were misled by its artifices and delusions, and is now exposed in all its native deformity; for it fortunately happens, that although he would admit that in theory it may be said that false opinions are more likely to be successfully combated by the weapons of reason than by those of war, yet that it so happens, that while we have been contending against the arms, we have been successfully contending against the principles of France, for these principles have been enforced by arms; it so happens, that while we have been contending for order against anarchy, we have been also contending for religion against impiety.

But though Jacobinism is shorn of its honours in a great measure, it is not destroyed. It has been asked what Jacobinism is—every thing detestable, vile, base, degrading, and cruel in human nature; and if he were asked what a Jacobin was, he would say, a man that had renounced his religion, and with it, as a necessary consequence, his moral probity. He would turn then to Bonaparte, and ask whether, from all his public recorded acts, he was the man likely to have put down Jacobinism, as an honourable gentleman seemed to think. If he dismissed certain Jacobins at St. Cloud, he dismissed them not because they were Jacobins, but because they opposed his power, for he replaced them shortly after with as many as bad. Gentlemen then must not relax their efforts in combating the fatal power of Jacobinism, which was nothing but the evil spirit personified under various shapes and transformations; and he who was not, therefore, a thorough hater of Jacobinism in all its forms, could be no honour to his country, no credit to human nature. But the contest must not be continued one day, and relinquished another; to be successful, it must be constant, persevering, unremitting, eternal. Let gentlemen cast their eyes a moment on France, and say whether nothing was to be dreaded even yet from it. From France, which had carried her corruptions into

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In the next place, let the House consider whether Ministers had abused the power confided to them hitherto ; was there any thing in the number, the description, or the treatment of the persons confined under suspicion of conspiring against the state that excited distrust ? Surely nothing in the number ; surely nothing in the description : and, as to their treatment, he did not expect to hear the prison report of last year again brought forward for the purpose of affixing on the Government the charge of inhumanity. It appears from that report, that much misrepresentation and exaggeration prevailed, and that so far from Government having been guilty of wanton and unnecessary cruelty, there was only an accidental inattention in those who had the superintendence of the Cold Bath Fields prison, in not separating one of those confined from the rest at a certain period, on account of his superior rank in life. Before he sat down he could not help noticing a remark that had been made by an honourable gentleman, " that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act had been discontinued with safety to the country for an interval of two years." He could not help saying, that he thought the disaffected had availed themselves of that interval to renew their plots, to re-organize their plans of sedition, or extend their treasons ; and, surely, the horrible attempt made upon the life of His Majesty was strongly connected with, and arising out of the spirit of the persons meeting at Copenhagen House.

His Lordship concluded with saying, that we undoubtedly were confiding a great power in the hands of His Majesty's Ministers, and that it carried with it great responsibility ; but it was a power that hitherto proved the salvation, and was still necessary for the security of our prosperity, religion, liberty, and laws.

Sir GREGORY PAGE TURNER was convinced of the propriety of the measure ; he had felt the necessity of it on former occasions ; he therefore gave it his support, and he would continue to give it his support, because he was sensible that that necessity still continued. He never would give up the principles that gave him a seat in that House : it was by supporting the Constitution that he continued to enjoy that honour. He adopted the arguments of the noble Lord who spoke last ; they were enough to establish his conviction. The measure proposed was the true remedy for the disease ; it should therefore be persisted in. He was conscious that he was an independent man ; but he would still support Ministers as long as they acted well, and he would be always proud to support the Constitution and the King.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that he was more eager on the opening of the debate for arguments in support of the motion than he could be now, as it was better to speak after strange arguments, such as he had just heard, than after no arguments at all. He listened with all respect and attention, as he was in hopes to find from the declaration of a gentleman (Mr. H. Lascelles) that the importance of this subject would strike the House, and produce an ample discussion. He observed that that gentleman just after quitted the House. That honourable gentleman expressed his satisfaction at the increasing loyalty of the nation, and thought that much of that loyalty was owing to the wise measures of Administration. The inference from which, in his opinion, was, that the greater the number of those men that were free from Jacobin principles, the more should they be entitled to prosecution. He would not wonder if on such reasoning it was said, that because the minority of the House of Commons was inferior in number to the majority, the minority should be *gagged*. "That honourable gentleman strengthens his argument, by adding, that because the majority of the kingdom does not steal, he would repeal the laws against stealing, and, therefore, infers, that notwithstanding the loyalty of the many, the suspension should not be repealed on account of the few. On our part it is answered, that if we wanted to repeal the Sedition and Treason laws, such an argument would be good; and I am sure, from such arguments, that he could not give the subject that full attention it required." He heard an honourable gentleman (Mr. Sturges), whom he hoped to hear often, argue the nature of French principles, observing, that the French Revolution was different from every other. He would remark, in turn, that the example of those principles cannot operate on the people of England. Their humane minds were not susceptible of an infection so terrible in its effects. And here was the whole bearing of the question; and on this consideration we were called upon to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, to remove the main-stay of the British Constitution. Though there might at one time have been a number of men infected with Jacobin principles, yet gentlemen on the other side of the House would admit, that the examples of perfidy, cruelty, and atrocity on the part of France, might have since brought those principles into hatred and detestation. "But some honourable gentlemen are of opinion, that Jacobinism is of such a nature that it cannot be changed. The practices of those very gentlemen might inform them, that the practices which are called Jacobinical are not altogether of such an incorrigible kind. The right honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer at one time was very eager in Par-

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liamentary Reform, and thought no good Administration could ever be formed without such a Reform. Yet now, as if he had performed *Quarantine*, he had changed his principles and opinions, and finds a very good Administration made up from such materials. Another right honourable gentleman (Mr. Windham), now on the right hand of his right honourable friend, once said of him, that all his robes of State and all his pomp of eloquence were not sufficient to conceal his filthy *dowlas*, or render him a fit ally for him: he too has changed his principles!" In reasoning on the principles of Government, he did not think it fair to conclude, that because a corrupt People, debased under a despotic State, had broken and then dashed about the chains that held them, the People of England, accustomed to a mild and beneficent Government, should be so restrained that their liberties should be ripped up and curtailed from mere unfounded suspicion. It could not be inferred, that because a wolf had committed depredation on the fold, a man should take down his dwelling, when the remedy would be to chain up this animal: or because the fire had burnt down a wooden bridge, that we should take down one built of solid stone. Nor should it be inferred, by parity of reasoning, that because the licentiousness of France had demolished all that was excellent in human institutions, the freedom of Englishmen should do the same mischief; for in all those cases it was the same. He could not forget the English Constitution. The people of England were not slaves broke loose from their chains, nor rushing from despotism into anarchy and disorder. Of the votes of the Commons he always had a respectful and due opinion; but with respect to Committees selected from the Minister's friends, he could not but observe, that with prejudices on their minds, and a bias from their connections, it was hardly possible that a just decision could be obtained; and such ever struck him on the perusal of the Reports of those Select Committees. He had also the same dislike to another Report (in the Lords), in which were depicted pikes and such things as frightfully fill the imagination with dread and horror. The learned gentleman (the Attorney General) seemed little disposed to pay any attention to the verdict of a Jury. This Jury had negatived the Report of a Select Committee, and he preferred that verdict to the reports. The opinion of the Judge (late Chief Justice Eyre) said on that occasion, that this mighty conspiracy turned out to be a conspiracy perfectly insignificant, a conspiracy without men, money, leaders, and even destitute of designs in their schemes: their rendezvous a back-garret, their arms a few muskets, and their exchequer about 10l. 15s. Such was its formidable appearance, and so inactive, that the

learned Judge said they even wanted zeal in the undertaking. He then called the attention of the House to the situation of those who were imprisoned under the act. And here he would ask, whether the Attorney General, who was versed in law and history, had ever read or heard of sham-plots and conspiracies; and if he had, was it not possible for them to return again? These were the instruments by which Ministers were enabled to carry on the war, to exercise a corrupt influence, and, by alarming the landed and monied interest with risings of the people, to govern the country with a system of terror. Let no gentleman then ask, what motives can influence such measures, when it is to such measures Ministers owe all their power. And is it not surprising to hear gentlemen talk of liberty of speech remaining (in allusion to Mr. Wilberforce), when fifty persons cannot meet to talk together? Whatever may be said in favour of our remaining liberties, he would maintain that the act of Habeas Corpus was the chief. A gentleman more remarkable for the pith and vigour of his expressions than for the neatness of them, said, that "the breath of the nostrils of Administration lay in Mr. Pitt's tongue;" and he would say, that however the muscle or sinew lay in other parts, the heart's blood of the Constitution lay in the act of Habeas Corpus. "For if Ministers can commit without any other process than their own suspicion, this foul principle may be pushed to the most dangerous extent; and if a man is once considered as a leading man in society of any kind, he may be exposed to attack and arrest from suspicion alone. An honourable gentleman (Mr. Sturges) has given a precedent from the reign of King William, by no means applicable to the present period, and which, adopted as such, must fall with a double edge." He was astonished to hear no difference made between the times. The majority of the nation at that period were Jacobites. "Is there a man that will not confess the Jacobins are a contemptible minority? The Jacobites were composed of the nobility, the landed interest, and were formidable in their principles and opposition to King William, and many of them suffered on the scaffold. The act made at the time of the conspiracy on the life of the then Monarch, was a specific act to confine those whose moral guilt was ascertained; but this act shuts up every man upon vague suspicion. The whole of the arguments of Administration rest upon the existence of Jacobin principles in France, and so long the act now proposed is to be continued." The absurdity of this was equally astonishing and alarming; it was a satisfaction to him that it was not his. Mr. Sheridan then noticed the argument of Mr. Canning on a former night, respecting the conduct of the nation in the case of

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King James the Second. He here observed, that the honourable gentleman did not reason correctly ; for he assumed a fact, where he (Mr. Sheridan) only put a supposition. The repeal of this act was impracticable in either case of sedition or tranquillity. In the former it would be urged, that it was necessary to restore peace, and in the latter case it will be always, as now demanded, would you remove the means by which the country has so much benefited ? Mr. Sheridan then reviewed the state of Ireland under Lord Fitzwilliam, and said, the outrages, cruelties, and atrocities, were not occasioned by French principles, but by the rooted hatred of the people to British Councils. The effects of such Councils were predicted by Earl Fitzwilliam ; all that rebellion which burst out in the small space of twenty-four hours, like characters written in lemon juice on a sheet of white paper, and held to the fire, as described by the Secretary at War. I might be permitted to ask — Heh, Mr. Secretary at War, where did you come by those amorous mysteries ? for they belong not to your office, though you are accustomed to read dispatches in cypher. He shewed and proved before that the discontents in Ireland were not the offspring of French principles, but resentments strongly engraved on the hearts of the Irish against this country. He then deprecated the Minister from such means of outrage to the loyalty of the nation, whose security was not less lodged in the hearts than in the arms of its volunteer corps. The country was no less upon its guard in its mind than it was in fact, and had little at any time to dread from a few contemptible ruffians in a cellar, against the security or laws of the country. This power in the hands of Ministers was absurd ; yet he was sorry to see it existing, as he would wish to guard against the effects it might produce. He regretted to read the reign of even Titus, and was sorry almost not to see that reign a tissue of crimes, that despotism might be discredited wherever it did exist. He then entered on the abuse of the power lodged in the hands of Ministers, evidenced in the case of Colonel Despard, and the infamous conduct of Aris, the keeper of the prison. Another abuse of power was under the Alien Bill : this bill, said to be for political purposes, was perverted into an instrument of family protection, as persons who had paid their addresses to the daughters of gentlemen were on that account taken up under this bill, and sent out of the kingdom. He was ready to acquit the noble Duke (Portland) at the head of that office, of being capable, from his character or temper, of such a proceeding ; but such, under him, was one of the uses made of it. He had to mention another abuse, which, though difficult to relate without ridicule, yet shewed the spirit of this power in the hands of Ministers. A man

of the name of Patterfon, who had a fhop at Manchester, kept a tilted cart, over which he fuperfcribed the names of Pitt and Patterfon. The man, who was known to have no partner in his trade, was asked what he meant by the name of Pitt on his cart, as he had no fhare in his bufinefs? "Ah," replied he, "if he has no fhare in the bufinefs, he has a large fhare in the profits of it." On this he was taken up, committed to Cold Bath Fields prifon, but fome time after liberated, with a ftrict order not to go within thirty miles of Manchester. Ridiculous as this appeared, it proved ferious to the man, and was the ruin of his bufinefs! On all the circumftances no new cafe had been made out why this act fhould be continued, but many have fhown that it fhould be repealed. Gentlemen fhould at leaft defer the farther confideration for a few days, until in decency they could make out fome means that would appear plausible, and give, at leaft, a formal pretext for their proceedings.

Mr. ELLISON faid, he fhould not prefume to follow the honourable gentleman who had juft fspoken on the other fide of the Houfe through all the topics of his eloquent fpeech; he fhould rather follow the example of an honourable Member for a northern county (Mr. H. Lafcelles), and exprefs the real sentiments of an independent country gentleman, not regarding the effect of being expofed to the wit of the honourable gentlemen on the other fide of the Houfe; for he would not allow the dread of ridicule to prevent him from honeftly expreffing his feelings. He did not wifh to fpeak often, and that for two reafons: the one was, that he wifhed to hear others who were wifer than himfelf; and the fecond was, that he might not be expofed to raillery, in which fome gentlemen were willing to indulge, without much regard to the feelings of others; but there were times and feafons when a fense of duty was to fupersede all other confiderations: fuch he deemed to be the cafe at this instant. Gentlemen on the oppofite fide of the Houfe were in the habit of accusing him and others with constantly fupporting the prefent Administration: he fupported this Administration, becaufe he was convinced in his confcience, that by fo doing he was rendering to his country effential fervice; this was his firm conviction, and he believed the great mafs of the people of this country agreed with him in fentiment upon this fubject. He believed in his confcience we had fome bofom traitors, and he believed there were among us fome who were endeavouring to create more. He fhould not at prefent go much at large into his reafons for voting for the fufpenfion of the Habeas Corpus Act. Thofe who differed from him did not know him, if they had any doubt of his having a real regard for the pure principles of true Liberty,

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or if they doubted that he knew the distinction between Jacobinism and Liberty: neither did they know him if they believed that he had not an esteem for the Habeas Corpus Act, as being one of the great bulwarks of our Constitution; it certainly was valuable—most valuable to this country; it was a medium between the prerogative of the Crown and the excesses of the People; it stood between the King and his People, and was a great security for both in times that were common; but in extraordinary times there might be reasons for suspending the operation of that great law for the common safety of the body politic. The present, in his opinion, was that time. The people, if they thought fit, had a right to suspend that law, and the people, in his opinion, spoke their sentiments in that House; for the people were fairly represented in that House, at least he thought so. Having said this, he should assign a few reasons for the vote he was to give in favour of this bill for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. First then, he would ask, was there any great or material change in the contest in which we were engaged since the time when Parliament had in its wisdom determined that the Habeas Corpus Act should be suspended? Gentlemen might say, as they often had said, that there was no necessity for this suspension, that there was no plot against the Constitution, no number of any consequence of those who were disaffected. Men might tell a story that had no foundation in truth so often, that by the force of mere repetition they might at last work a belief of it in themselves, and therefore, *Crede quod volo*, they wished others to believe it; they wished others to take it upon their will, and therefore he might add, *Stat pro ratione voluntas*. But he took neither the opinions nor the wills of others for his guide, while he had as his guide experience and the evidence of facts. By that evidence he was led to think, that the common enemy had not ceased to wish for the destruction of this country. After what we had all seen with our own eyes, and heard with our own ears, he owned it was to him a matter of astonishment, if any gentleman could put his hand upon his heart, and say, that such a measure as that now before the House was not necessary for the safety of this country. We all knew that a plan had been laid for our utter destruction as a nation: it was true, indeed, that those who wished to accomplish our destruction were few; but it was not the number but their power that we ought to be apprehensive of, if there were no such precautions as this put into the hands of the Executive Government. A great deal had been said, which might have been spared, about Cold Bath Fields; for it appeared to him to have no real bearing upon the subject now before the House. The question was, whether

this bill was or was not a measure fit to be adopted? He thought it was; he believed it was a measure that would do, as it had done, much good to the country; he believed the people of England thought so, and that they wished it to pass into a law; not, indeed, to enable Ministers to carry on the war for the restoration of the House of Bourbon to the Throne of France; but they wished it to be carried into a law, the better to enable Ministers to bring about a peace that shall be a blessing, not such a peace as we could obtain now; for in his conscience he believed, that if any peace were made at this moment, and he were to go down to his constituents, he should find it his duty to address them thus:—"Gentlemen, you have a peace indeed; but do not rejoice, for it is not a blessing, but rather a curse." But he had such confidence in His Majesty's present Ministers, that they would put him in a situation to address his constituents in such a manner as this, whenever peace shall be made by them:—"Set aside your apprehensions of danger, lay by your swords, take up your instruments for cultivating the arts of peace; for now you have a peace upon which you may depend."

Mr. CANNING said, he was extremely happy that he gave way to the honourable gentleman who had just spoken; for he had delivered a great deal of good sense, and he spoke the sense of the great mass of the people of England, who, happily for themselves, and happily for the rest of mankind, were not tainted with those principles, for the prevention of the mischief of which the bill now before the House was introduced. The fallacy of his honourable friend (Mr. Sheridan) throughout the whole of his eloquent speech was this:—he had confounded the whole mass of the people of England with the objects of this bill; and he had under that fallacy argued, that the bill was a coercion on the people of England. There was no such coercion intended—thank God, there was no such need; but because there was no disposition in the people to render such coercion necessary, it did not thence follow that there should be no such bill as this; for the objects of this bill, although few, were nevertheless fit objects for the coercion of it, and the House would be remiss if they did not provide a remedy for the evil, which would be felt if such persons were under no restraint. His honourable friend, who had so strenuously opposed this bill, had failed to make out many of the positions he laid down, and he himself was aware of it. He brought forward the testimony of the two Reports of the Parliament of England and of Ireland upon the subject of the disaffection and treasonable pursuits of various persons in the two countries. The Report of the Irish Parliament he gave credit to, but the Report of the English Parliament he re-

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garded as waste paper. Now, upon that subject, he knew of no fair ground of preferring the character of the Irish Parliament to that of the English for integrity, nor did he know of any ground for preferring any body of men upon earth to the Parliament of Great Britain for integrity. The manner in which his honourable friend had quoted the language of the great and learned Judge before whom the state trials took place, was not intended to have any effect, except as a pleasant fally; for his honourable friend did not expect any grave attention to be paid to it: in truth, he had put into the mouth of that learned Judge words which that great lawyer never uttered; and yet these were the facts, as they were called, on which repeatedly expressed sentiments were to be set aside; and by such observations as these his honourable friend expected that the good sense of the people of this country was to be carried away, that they were to believe that a formal acquittal of a person charged with a specific crime could not, in the nature of things, possibly leave behind it any suspicion of moral guilt; and all this while we recollected that we but narrowly escaped destruction from the machinations of those very persons and their associates. Then his honourable friend proceeded to observe, that there was now no danger, because what had happened in France had opened the eyes of all mankind. He should be glad to know, if this conviction had taken place, how it happened that it did not take place sooner? We all knew the pre-eminence of Bonaparte—few doubted the superiority of his talents—none questioned that his power was at this hour as great, if not greater, than any that ever was possessed by any other man; and yet gentlemen who said the eyes of all mankind were now opened by what had happened in France; seemed to have forgotten the progress of the French Revolution. During the progress of Brissot, one of the great regenerators of the human race, and thence downwards until we come to the present moment, the series was uniform; but somehow or other gentlemen had not, until very lately, seen that French principles had opened the eyes of mankind. He would take a short view of this part of the subject. He would suppose that many men might have believed, and innocently believed, there was, at the time of Brissot, discovered a mode of conducting public affairs so entirely new, the like to which was never thought of before, and so excellent that it tended to making both nations and individuals more happy even than they were before. Suppose a leader in such a scheme were to hold a conference with any other person who knew nothing of his plan, but who was willing to hear a discourse upon it; and suppose that the advocate for this plan were to say, "We have discovered

the means of removing all the political evils of this world ; if we are not interrupted, its beneficial effects will soon be visible ; let not the present established powers of the earth interpose ; let us have a fair experiment upon the efficacy of it—let us try it.”—Suppose the person to whom this was addressed were to say, “ Be it so, we shall not interpose ; try your experiment ; but as we all know that, in the usual course of things, men who are fond of experiments do not stop so soon as less adventurous persons would wish to do, (for although they say they will risque the half of their estate, frequently the whole is devoted before the experiment is given up,) and that every man who pursued the discovery of the Philosopher’s stone was sure to become a beggar ; therefore let us have some boundary, beyond which your experiment shall not go in the event of its being successful.”—If such a dialogue were to take place, he should like to know whether any man, even one who was most partial to experiments upon politics, would before hand assent to going the length which was witnessed on the 10th of August, and the 2d and 3d of September, when organized assassination became the order of the day in Paris ? Would not any man say, if any of these things were stated to him before-hand as parts of the experiments of this new plan for the happiness of the human race, “ God forbid we should go this length !—I can never assent to any plan which requires such experiments to be made before its utility is completely proved.”—And yet the advocates of the French Revolution went the whole length of supporting French principles until this actually happened, and even long after they all happened ; and these French principles were long after this endeavoured to be introduced into Great Britain and Ireland. What had since happened to open the eyes of mankind ? Why truly nothing, except that some gentlemen thought that we ought to negotiate for peace. What was the great evil of the French Revolution ? The facility with which ambition might gratify itself at the expence of millions of the human race. Were he to define what ambition was, he would say it was that quality in the human mind that altered its colour as circumstances might alter, but whose nature was invariably the same, and led to good or to evil according to the temper and pursuits of the person who possessed it. The ambition in his right honourable friend, for instance, led him forward in a career of virtue—The ambition of a Jacobin was to procure and preserve power by proscription, by plunder, by confiscation, and by death ; or by the utter destruction of all establishments, civil or religious ; and by the erection of that hideous anarchy in which order is buried, and confusion triumphs in the ruins. Such had been, with various shades of difference, the ruling prin-

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ciple of all the prime actors in the French Revolution from La Fayette to Bonaparte. Here Mr. Canning went over all the leading characters that have appeared in the French Revolution, as Mirabeau, Condorcet, Brissot, Robespierre, Carnot, Reubel, Barras, &c. &c. giving to each appropriate epithets to describe the leading features of their character, and observed, that all their peculiar qualities were met, blended, and brought into perfect consummation in Bonaparte himself—Why did he mention those things?—He mentioned them, to show how very slowly it was that the advocates of the French Revolution and the admirers of French principles would be brought to see their error—to shew how much it took to convince men of the hideous form of what they had originally admired as a beauty. He then proceeded to shew, that the case in the reign of King William had been misapplied by his honourable friend (Mr. Sheridan), and having argued that point at considerable length, and then passed on to the observation of Mr. Sheridan, that there was a great difference between the people of England and the people of France, he admitted there was much difference; but he objected to the argument, because it proved too much, for it proved that no provision should be made against the wicked if they were few: and to shew what the contagion of an evil example might be, he called the attention of the House to the situation of Switzerland, where those men who were proverbial for mildness, for candour, simplicity, and an attachment to that system of protection to persons and property which elevated them in the opinion of all who knew them, had been made to change, as it were, their very nature, and reduce their country to a scene of plunder, confiscation, proscription, and bloodshed: such were the effects of listening to a system of Jacobinical reformation, which was another name for the destruction of all the establishments of this world. But his honourable friend had observed, that we had in this country a large volunteer force for the protection of our true liberty. He admitted we had such a force, and he rejoiced in it: nor had he the least doubt of its efficacy, should the season arrive for calling it into action for the protection of our internal freedom; and he hoped it would be kept up on future occasions: we, indeed, owed it to the character of the French Revolution, and it had arisen out of it—but he hoped that, valuable as the exertions of that force would be, if necessary for the preservation of our internal freedom, it would be long, indeed, before we should be driven to the necessity of calling for that use to be made of that force—He hoped the day was far off when this country should be obliged to military force for the preservation of its liberty, in preference to legislative provision—Against foreign in-

vaders, or against traitors in England, the volunteer force of it, he was confident, would be effectual; but for the preservation of our civil liberty, the Constitution had provided other bulwarks; it was provided with civil arms, which, thank God, had not yet needed the aid of military force. He knew it was a common parlance that the liberties of this country had been sealed with the blood of our ancestors. That was not true to any considerable extent; for the liberties of this country had been secured with less bloodshed than that of any other country on the face of the globe that ever enjoyed any liberty. It was not," said he, "upon the plain of the field of battle, but upon this plain, the floor of this House, that the Constitution of England has triumphed, and triumphed it has, without the aid of external force, and it was done by the arms which we have still in our hands."

Mr. SHERIDAN said a few words in explanation. He was willing to allow the eloquence with which his honourable friend had answered his arguments. He would not now examine how far they had been refuted, but he must mention one or two of them which had been misrepresented. He did not say that the Report of the Irish House of Commons had not been confirmed, but that the Report of the British House of Commons had been falsified. Notwithstanding the alarming representations given there, we had remained in a state of tranquillity; which proves that there never was any good ground for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and that there was much less now than ever. He had not recommended revolution, as his honourable friend had alledged, but rather cautioned the House against any innovation. Neither had he expressed a wish that the volunteer corps should be called in to keep the people in subjection, as they had in Ireland, but merely said that the volunteer corps had been raised since the first suspension of the Act, that they gave additional security to Government, and thus rendered it still more improper that the people should be deprived of their liberties.

Mr. CANNING said, that he did not mean to assert that his honourable friend abetted revolution, but merely to shew that his argument went this length, if it proved any thing.

Mr. BUXTON was clearly of opinion that the Habeas Corpus Act should be suspended, not, as he was represented to have said, till Jacobin principles had totally ceased to exist in France, but as long as there was a Jacobin Government in France. Much misrepresentation had been made with regard to the sufferings endured by those confined in virtue of the suspension. It was an undoubted fact, that Colonel Despard, of whom so much had been said, re-

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failed to go into a room where he would have had fire and every comfort, and that he preferred his solitary dungeon to living amidst the other prisoners. The people taken up from Manchester had likewise been treated with the utmost attention and tenderness.

Sir W. MILNER said, that he opposed the suspension of the Act, because he was instructed by his constituents so to do. These he considered himself in duty bound to obey. He had learnt a portion of English history that night, of which he was formerly ignorant. However, though a man in former times might have been confined for many years upon suspicion, he was confident that such a proceeding would not be tolerated now; and that great as was the influence of the right honourable gentleman, if he were to attempt to abuse it, he would be unable to carry through the House a bill for that purpose.

The question was then put, That the bill be read a second time, when there appeared—

Ayes, 98; Noes, 12. Majority, 86.

LIST of the MINORITY.

Adair, R.	Martin, J.	Sheridan, R. B.
Barclay, G.	Milner, Sir W.	Smith, W.
Copley, Sir L.	Plomer, W.	Tierney, G.
Jolliffe, W.	Richardson, J.	Western, C. C.

TELLERS—Burdett, Sir F. and Hobhouse, B.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, February 20.

The royal assent was given by commission to the Bread Regulation and the Test Indemnity Bills; and after the decision of an appeal cause,

The Archbishop of CANTERBURY addressed the House at some length on the scarcity of corn. The venerable Prelate took a general view of the subject, and lamented in feeling terms the inconveniences and distresses which the lower orders of society must unavoidably suffer. He dwelt upon the great prevalence and effect which the examples of those in higher stations, and the rich, must have on persons of the above descriptions; and it was strongly incumbent upon them, and more especially on the legislators of the country, to strain every nerve to meet the evil, and make it bear as

lightly as possible upon the shoulders of the poor. His Grace did not recommend a direct legislative interference on the present occasion, but spoke highly in approbation of the good effects of solemn engagements made, and strictly adhered to, by different bodies of men, with a view to diminish the consumption of flour, and promote the use of approved substitutes for that article in their respective families. So strongly was he impressed with this conviction, that he would then propose a set of resolutions, forming an agreement to be signed by such of their Lordships as approved the idea, to carry certain measures into effect, tending to diminish the use of flour, &c. in their respective families.

The following motions were then made by his Grace :

“ Resolved, That, in consequence of the high price and deficient supply of wheat and other grain, it is expedient to adopt such measures as may be practicable for diminishing the consumption thereof during the continuance of the present pressure, and for introducing the use of such articles as may conveniently be substituted in the place thereof :

“ That the argument hereunto subjoined be engrossed, and laid upon the table of this House, in order to be subscribed by any Lord of this House who shall think fit to subscribe the same himself, or in his name by any other Lord :

“ In consequence of the high price of grain, and the evils arising therefrom, we, the undersigned, agree, that until the tenth day of October next we will not consume, nor permit to be consumed in any week within our respective families, more wheaten bread than in the proportion of one quartern loaf for each of the individuals of whom our said families may be composed ; and also, that, during the same period, we will discontinue, and cause to be discontinued within our said families, all pastry.

“ That a message be sent to the House of Commons, to acquaint them that this House has come to the said resolution and agreement.”

Lord CLIFTON (Earl of DARNLEY) expressed his opinion that legislative interference on such an occasion would rather be attended with injurious than beneficial effects. He spoke in disapprobation of much of what had fallen from a noble Lord (Auckland) on the subject on a former night, and also of the ground-work of the Report of the other House of Parliament, which seemed to proceed principally from the statements given in evidence by two gentlemen, who, however respectfully he might think of their information and talents, were far from infallible. The subject was one of the most serious nature, and on which an alarm should not

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lightly be suffered to prevail in the country. His Lordship entered into some comments upon the statements of Mr. Arthur Young, and exhibited the result of some information collected by himself, tending to shew that the scarcity did not prevail to near so great a degree as set forth by that gentleman: in many parts of England the deficiency did not exceed a fifth, in most not a fourth. Why then should the trumpet of alarm be sounded, or the flag of distress held out on the occasion? Instead of doing good, such conduct must have the contrary effect: for over-stating the scarcity must induce the farmer to raise, instead of lowering his prices. He must protest against an opinion being suffered to go abroad, that the scarcity was nearly as great as stated in the Report. A gentleman of high authority on agricultural subjects, resident in the west of England, had informed him that the quantity of old wheat on hand would last until the first of May. From this, and information which he collected from other quarters, he was convinced that the degree of scarcity was by no means so great as had been held out.

The Earl of LIVERPOOL observed, that the propriety of investigating the subject must be obvious, when it was considered that in a very short interval the price of corn had advanced to 110 shillings the quarter. He spoke in commendation of the Report of the other House of Parliament, as the best result which many enlightened gentlemen could make from the materials and information before them. It was not wheat alone that had so alarmingly risen, but barley and other kinds of grain in proportion. There was no occasion, he observed, for unnecessary alarm. At the same time he felt the difficulty of legislative provisions on the subject, and principally on account of the different circumstances of different parts of the country. Regulations which would be beneficial in one county or district, would obviously be injurious in others. He approved highly of the mode chalked out by the venerable Prelate, in recommending to the Legislature, and the higher orders of society, to economize in their consumption of flour. With respect to the prominent regulations proposed by his Grace, one quartern loaf per week to each individual, he doubted whether such a quantum would be sufficient. However, that would be matter of experiment. It was not, however, the scarcity of the moment alone which they should consider, but the future prospects of the country on that head. There were various modes of proceeding; the subject was extensive and complicated; but he would aver, that the situation of the lower orders of society, in such a crisis, called for the serious attention of that House; and particularly when they considered the

degree of loyalty, firmness, and patience, manifested by the great body of that description of people, on the most trying occasions,

Lord CLIFTON observed, that the immense increase in the price of corn, as stated by the noble Earl, certainly rendered the subject a matter of the most serious consideration; but in his opinion, a direct Legislative interference, or treating the business in the way it had been treated, would raise the price from 11 os. to 20 os. per quarter.

Lord AUCKLAND observed, that with respect to what the noble Lord who spoke last had said of his sounding the trumpet of alarm, he must say, that a certain degree of alarm on such an occasion was necessary to prevail, as the scarcity was allowed by all to be one of a most serious nature; its causes should be investigated for the satisfaction of all, and to ascertain whether it were a real or fictitious scarcity; and every nerve should be strained, to obviate the impending evil. The line of conduct which the noble Lord seemed to recommend, reminded him of an anecdote related in that excellent work, the Spectator, respecting the result of a conversation between a dissipated young man and a reverend Prelate, on the subject of a future state. The former said, that he lived well, and without the least reference to such a consideration, as he had no belief in such a state of existence. To this the Prelate observed, that he lived under the conviction of such an end; but that if it happened he should be wrong, he should be at no loss; whereas, if such a state really existed, the consequences to his opponent in argument would be dreadful indeed.—So in the case before them—By investigation, and looking the evil full in the face, no loss or danger could ensue;—but by neglect, the most fatal consequences might result. The data alluded to by the noble Lord formed but very imperfect grounds for a discussion. It was not the state of any particular spot or county in England that was to be considered, but the whole of Great Britain taken together. The plan recommended by the venerable Prelate had his most cordial approbation, and much might be done towards the great end through various other channels. They were then upon the eve of the circuits. His learned friend upon the woolstack might instruct the Judges to recommend the Grand Juries to promote the most rigid economy in their respective districts. The Bishops, in their pastoral capacity, might recommend the same to every class of the clergy. With respect to the idea of a quartern loaf lasting an individual for a certain period, it might be taken as a *medium for cursory calculation*. In general, he believed, that more than one quartern loaf and a half, besides a consumption of flour in other shapes, were used by each individual in

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families of the description alluded to. The proposition of the learned Prelate would, therefore, go to do away one third of the average consumption. This, with the use of other succedaneums, might well be effected. He had himself tried it in former periods of scarcity. There were more than 700,000 houses in which this might be done, indeed he might say near 900,000 in which the accommodation might be carried into effect. But suppose it could be brought to bear in only 600,000 houses, these might be reasonably supposed to contain three millions of people: the saving thereby effected would be just 1,500,000 quartern loaves per week, which would feed two millions of people, a number exceeding, he really believed, one fourth of those who necessarily must otherwise feel the effects of the scarcity. His Lordship scouted the idea held out by some, that France was a country to which we, in the event of peace, might look for a supply. The reverse was the fact. France, in its happiest periods, never produced equal to its own consumption; and he cited the authority of M. Neckar, that 600,000*l.* was the average sum for a certain number of years paid for imported corn. It was positive madness to think of recurring to France. He spoke generally in approbation of the Report of the other House of Parliament, and said that the idea of the venerable Prelate was one of the objects which the Committee wished to effectuate. By a line adopted hitherto, the subject lay regularly open to parliamentary discussion, and the suggestions of any noble Lord. Within the last three days he had received more than a hundred letters, many of them written by respectable and ingenious men; but their suggestions were of such a sort as would be more properly discussed elsewhere.

Lord CLIFTON, in explanation, said that he was prepared to prove that the facts to which he alluded were over-stated; and that therefore the alarm held forth was not only unnecessary, but false.

The Earl of SUFFOLK considered the subject as one of the most serious nature; it required investigation, and that every nerve should be strained to meet the evil. The magnitude of the evil might be estimated by the consideration of the enormous price of wheat. It was their duty to promote every means of abridging the consumption. He wondered that among the various substitutes proposed, that of rice was not pre-eminently held forth. One-third of the inhabitants of one quarter of the world were subsisted on that vegetable alone. Rice, when mixed with flour, afforded a good and palatable bread. Proper substitutes should be one of the subjects of inquiry in the Committee. Indeed, if ample premiums

were held out for the suggestion of substitutes, it might be beneficial, as the evil was not only a present, but a growing one. There were great and extensive tracts of land in various parts of the kingdom lying quite unproductive, the cultivation of which would be attended with the happiest effects.

The Bishop of DURHAM spoke highly in commendation of the plan suggested by the venerable Prelate, who had come forward on the occasion with all that dignity which appertained to his station and character: he thought it must be attended with the best effects, as the lower orders of the people naturally look up with attention to the example and conduct of the higher classes of society; and were such a model adopted by the latter, it would convince them that they were determined not to indulge in the luxuries of life, to the prejudice and injury of the poor. The retrenchment should not be confined to the article of bread; there were a variety of luxuries, which at such times ought to be laid aside by the wealthy, for the accommodation and comfort of the poor.

Lord GRENVILLE agreed in the impolicy of proposing compulsory measures in such cases as the present. The propositions alluded to might be attended with good effects; and he believed that but one sentiment pervaded the House on the question, which was, by every proper and effectual means to avert the threatened calamity; at the same time he thought that frequent and public agitations of the subject would rather tend to increase than to lessen the evil, and in this point of view he seemed to differ from the noble Lord who cited the anecdote from a popular work, as by promoting the discussion, they would not remain in the situation from which they set out, but be drawn into a worse; it must, by creating an unnecessary degree of alarm, increase the evil and augment the existing distress. The plan in question was in principle little different from that suggested to the House three or four years ago. There was one point, however, that transpired in the course of the debate, which he could not pass over, namely, that it was necessary by such proceedings as these recommended by the propositions before the House, to evince to the lower, that the higher orders of society felt for, and were determined to alleviate their distresses. Happily this was not necessary, as there existed in this country an union of interests, an intimacy of connection between all orders of society that has convinced all that their interests and happiness were founded on the same basis, and to be promoted by the same means. Such a calamity as the present was felt more or less by every member of the community.

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Lord CLIFTON again spoke in explanation.

Lord HOBART wished to observe shortly upon part of what had fallen in the course of the evening from the noble Lord who spoke last. It was not from the evidence of Messrs. Scott and Young, that the statements in the Report of the other House of Parliament were founded: it was known to exist; it was felt by all before the investigation commenced; and there was incontrovertible testimony of an alarming degree of scarcity. He was of opinion, that the adoption of the regulations before the House would be attended with beneficial effects; and it was well known, that no body of men had so much weight in the country in general, as the Members of both Houses of Parliament. Without having recourse to compulsory measures, the example of the Legislature, in such cases, would have more effect than any other plan which could be devised.

The LORD CHANCELLOR left the woolfack, and said that he should approve in the greatest part the measure brought forward by the most reverend Prelate, if some of the terms were so altered as to make it appear the proposition and agreement of those noble Lords who signed it. As it stood now, it was in the form of a resolution; and a resolution of the noble Lords as a body, seemed as if it were a legislative act. His Lordship said that any Legislative act, in his opinion, would tend to do more prejudice than service in a case of this kind. The learned Lord then took notice of the Report of the House of Commons, and was by no means satisfied with its being founded on the opinions of two gentlemen only. That was not the best evidence which might have been obtained, because much more was to have been had; neither had the proceedings of the Committee been discreet or accurate on the occasion: they had put the questions in such a manner that they could only receive one answer to them. He agreed with Lord Clifton, that Mr. Arthur Young must have been much mistaken in his calculation as to the average produce of corn in England, when he had fixed it from twenty-two to twenty-four bushels an acre. The noble and learned Lord said, that in the course of the last twenty-five years, he had had many opportunities, both private and public, of investigating the average price of corn and other provisions; and he had found, as well from those, as from the opinion of one of the greatest men this country had produced (Mr. Burke), who had had certainly the most accurate and extensive knowledge and information of the provisions of this country, and he, and all those he had consulted on the subject, were convinced, that the average produce of corn, take the whole country throughout, was not more

than twenty bushels an acre. His Lordship then proposed, that instead of the word—"Resolved, that we the undersigned," &c.—the word "Agreed" should be substituted; which was acceded to, and the measure unanimously adopted.

MOTION FOR PEACE.

Lord STANHOPE—"My Lords, not having for several years troubled your Lordships with my sentiments on public affairs, I consider it to be my duty, in the present alarming situation of the country, to suggest to your Lordships why you ought, and how you might put an end to the war. I should indeed deem myself highly culpable if I delayed longer in submitting to your Lordships my sincere and conscientious opinion on this important subject. My Lords, I have to regret, more than I can express, that the honest, and, I trust, judicious advice I gave early in the war, did not at that time meet your Lordships approbation. If I can prove that the danger arising from a continuance of the war is greater than any danger that can be reasonably imagined in putting an end to it—if I can satisfy your Lordships that there would be an advantage arising from peace, which it will be impossible to obtain by continuing the contest—if I can prove that you are wasting your resources, even if the war was in certain respects proper (though I contend it is proper in none) faster than the French Republic is wasting her's—if I can shew that this war is to be attributed either to the misconception of His Majesty's Ministers, or, what is worse, to the grossest want of integrity (I trust it is attributable to their misconception)—if I can offer reasons which have occurred to me since I retired into the country, that shew the indispensable necessity of putting an end to the war—I then flatter myself I shall have your Lordships approbation in favour of the motion I shall have the honour to submit. Anxious as I am to obtain your approbation, I am more anxious to obtain your votes, but much more anxious to obtain your conviction; for I think, though there are many who perhaps would not, by any thing I can say, be persuaded to vote for a specific proposition of peace; yet, if convinced by my arguments of the necessity of it, they might give such advice in private to those who have the power to terminate the war, as in all probability would be productive of that effect. My Lords, there is one topic so important, that I cannot wave the discussion of it. I mean the subject of finance; as it is a subject generally conceived to be difficult, I will make it clear; as it is supposed to be a dull subject, I will be short; and as it certainly is a subject of the first importance, I feel it my duty not to pass it over in silence. I shall have no dispute with Minis-

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ters about figures, for I have in my hand a pamphlet published by the Secretary of the Treasury, stating a great number of items, several of which I disapprove, but every one of which I will take, so that we shall not have the debate diverted from the principle to detail. We shall have no quarrel about millions or pounds, but you will have a picture of the situation of the country, such as none of your Lordships have had the least conception of. I will endeavour to debate the whole question as becomes the subject, and as becomes myself, with that temper and moderation which is best calculated to produce conviction. A noble Lord acted properly when he applauded another noble Lord this evening for sounding the trumpet of alarm; your Lordships will do right to hear me also sound the trumpet of alarm, and the trumpet of truth. There is one item which I shall state, which is not in Mr. Rose's book, and which he has totally omitted, not being a tax paid to Government, namely, the amount at which I shall take the parochial and county rates; but except that item, let it be remembered that there is not one item in the account which I am going to state to your Lordships, that is not to be found in the book I hold in my hand, published by that Secretary of the Treasury. The items stated by Mr. Rose I have endeavoured to bring to a point, the better to enable your Lordships to understand them; these are so dispersed in his book, that unless they were brought under one view, it would be impossible for your Lordships to comprehend them. In the last page of this pamphlet you will find an Appendix (No. 7), the title of which is "An Account of the Income of Great Britain, as stated by Mr. Pitt, distinguishing the portion of it likely to be taxed under the Act." Your Lordships will see in this statement, as it was presented to the House of Commons, a return of the income of landlords: it is stated at the rate of 12s. 6d. per acre the average. Will any man say that 12s. 6d. per acre is the average for the whole country? Certainly it is too much; but I will not quarrel with him for this; the produce, taking this statement for granted, then is 25,000,000l.—This is the whole amount of the income of all the landlords in the country, high and low, rich and poor. Well, but Mr. Rose makes a deduction for those landlords whose incomes are under 60l. a year, who pay nothing, and for those under 200l. a year, who will pay, on an average, only one-fiftieth, the result of which is, that out of the 25,000,000l. of income, that which is actually taxable amounts, according to Mr. Rose, to no more than 20,000,000l. But see what egregious blunders he makes; for in two subsequent items he takes Scotland, and the places beyond sea, at 10,000,000l. but

without making the smallest deduction, or distinguishing the taxable part from that which is not taxable. Is there not a deduction to be made here? Will he say there is no landlord in Scotland whose income is below 200*l.* a year?—No school-boy would commit such blunders, or proceed on such false calculations. He then puts down 2,000,000*l.* for the professions; what is this but saying to the people of the country, the more you are sick, and the more you are litigious, the more you are capable to pay taxes. For although it be perfectly true, that the professions may be taxed, yet the income of the professions should, in the statement of the account, be deducted out of the income of those by whom the professions are supported. His next item is the income upon houses, and that he states at 6,000,000*l.* In all taxes where owners of houses are themselves occupiers, they are liable to repairs and various expences, which consequently operate *quoad* such houses as a defalcation of income instead of an increase, and render the statement in this particular erroneous. Therefore I shall omit the item respecting houses, as well as the item respecting the professions."

Lord AUCKLAND addressed a few words to the Lord Chancellor, but in too low a tone of voice to be distinctly heard.

Lord STANHOPE said, "I wish the noble Lord would speak a little louder. What he says is, I dare say, very sensible, and I should wish to hear him—But to proceed—I say, if a person lets a house, and receives a net income, a certain tax may be estimated upon it; but the person who hires the house is poorer to the same amount, and therefore is to the same amount less liable to pay taxes. Therefore the houses which are let by the owners, as well as those which are inhabited by the owners, should all be omitted in making up the account. Now, my Lords, I have to make such a statement relative to the finances of the country, as must astonish you; and after having stated the sum total, I shall give you the articles of which it is composed; and I have the book of the Secretary of the Treasury, so that if any person doubts my statement, he may take the book and cast up the items. I can also state the very pages; and if Ministers shall object to any of the items of the Secretary of the Treasury, it will be a difference of opinion between Ministers and George Rose, and not between Ministers and Citizen Stanhope—[*A general burst of laughter.*—]My Lords, the melancholy fact proved by this book is, that the expences of the country, after the war, supposing its immediate termination to take place, including the taxes paid to Government, including the tythes paid the clergy, which are a tax as they respect those who pay them, and including the parish rates, which also is a tax, would amount to the

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enormous sum of 44,354,000*l.* per annum; and this supposing peace was to take place to-morrow. I wish noble Lords would take down the items which compose this sum total, for a subject of more importance there cannot be. I take also from Mr. Rose another article of which I have got the total, and that is the whole produce of the land which can be taxed, and which he calls taxable; it includes the whole produce of all the lands in England, above 200*l.* per ann. and all the lands in Scotland without exception, and all the incomes of individuals in Great Britain arising from property in Ireland, and the East and West Indies. The income of all our landed possessions at home and beyond sea will, according to the items in Mr. Rose's account, give a sum total of only 43,000,000*l.* annually. Take this sum, and consider, at the same time, the amount of the taxes you would have to pay after the war, if it were to cease to-morrow. It will then appear that the amount of the taxes is 1,350,000*l.* a year more than the whole landed produce of the kingdom and its dependencies, according to the statement of Mr. Rose himself. Will Ministers venture to tell us of the real prosperity of the country, when they are thus boasting of the flourishing state of the public revenue, when our taxes are not only more than the produce of England, but of Scotland, Ireland, and the Indies East and West? I do not believe any noble Lord was aware that such a statement could be laid before the House.—[*A laugh from the Cross Bench.*]—You laugh! I am astonished that Ministers should treat so serious a question with levity; but I will state particulars, and then let them laugh if they can.

The items are as follow :

Total Annual Produce of the Land which can be taxed.

Landlords rents, as stated by Mr. Rose	- -	£. 20,000,000
Tenants profits, as stated by Mr. Rose	- -	6,000,000
Mines, navigation, and timber, as stated by Mr. Rose		3,000,000
Tithes of the superior clergy, as stated by Mr. Rose	-	4,000,000
Proportions for Scotland, and possessions beyond sea, as stated by Mr. Rose	- - - -	10,000,000

Total annual produce of the land which can be taxed £. 43,000,000

Annual Taxes after the War, if the War were to end to-morrow.

Estimate of the peace establishment, as stated by the Committee in 1791, and as stated by Mr. Rose	-	£. 16,000,000
Charge incurred during the war, by loans and funding, as stated by Mr. Rose	- - - -	8,264,000

Increased charges not included in the estimate of 1791 (in consequence of the increase of pay for 18,000 seamen, and of the army; and also in consequence of increased half-pay, &c. &c. as stated by Mr. Rose, (in pages 5 and 6) £.	1,260,000
Additional peace establishment beyond the establishment in the last peace; together with the expence of yeomanry and volunteers, as stated by Mr. Rose	1,330,000
Total of tithes paid by the people, as stated by Mr. Rose	5,000,000
Parochial and county rates	5,000,000
Income tax, as stated by Mr. Rose	7,500,000
Total of taxes per annum	44,354,000
Deduct the total annual produce of the land which can be taxed, as stated above	43,000,000
Annual deficiency after the war, if the war were to cease to-morrow	£. 1,354,000

" Now I cannot, my Lords, suppose any error in this statement. If I should be contradicted, and told that it proceeds upon mistaken principles, I must do that which none of your Lordships will imagine I came down to this House to do, namely, justify George Rose. I have stated the whole produce of the country, and the whole of the taxes. The taxes exceed the income in the proportion I have mentioned; I mean exclusively of the trade of the country. I have to quarrel with Mr. Rose for his estimate respecting the income arising from trade. The fair way is to draw the balance, by considering what comes in from abroad, in contradistinction to what goes abroad. His estimate of the balance of trade, which he states at 14,000,000*l.* is unfair; because no man will suppose that it can continue to be 14,000,000*l.* after the war is over, and which even now is an exaggerated statement; but, to have no dispute upon this subject, I will take the supposed balance of trade exactly as he gives it. Now, my Lords, as to the comparative strength of England and France—when I was a Member of the House of Commons, I moved for a return of the number of houses in England and Wales; they appeared by the return to be about 1,000,000; and this fact has been ascertained, that when you want to know the number of inhabitants of a country, get the number of houses, and multiply by 4 and 3-4ths, and you arrive nearly at the true estimate. I, however, multiplied by 5—this gives 5,000,000 for England and Wales, which, with the population of Scotland, makes 6,000,000. Now then look to the population of the French Republic—I find that, including Savoy and Nice, and all those countries it has conquered on the Rhine, the population of France is from 32 to 33,000,000; and this

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does not include the inhabitants of those countries which are allied to France ; that is to say, Holland, Switzerland, and Spain. In estimating the resources of England and the French Republic, I shall, in the first place, deduct what the people of this country pay for parochial and county rates, because I have no information of the exact amount of payments of a similar nature made in France. This reduces our taxes 5,000,000*l.* below the statement I made to your Lordships. Then taking what remains, namely, 39,354,000*l.* and dividing it by the six millions of inhabitants in Great Britain, you will find, that what the people of this country have to pay in taxes and in tythes will amount to above 6*l.* 10*s.* for every inhabitant. Now I find by Mr. Rose's estimate, that the whole sum paid by the French Republic annually to its Government is 15,000,000*l.* ; consequently 15,000,000*l.* to be paid by 32,000,000 of inhabitants, amounts to less than 10*s.* each ; yet we are told that this country, where we pay 6*l.* 10*s.* is the best governed country in the world ; and France, where they pay only 10*s.* is oppressed by its rulers, distracted in its councils, ruined in its finances, and incapable of defending itself. It is impossible for any one to consider such an argument in a serious point of view. The next point to which I shall draw the attention of your Lordships, is the comparative state of the cultivation of England and France. Having been in places where I have seen much waste land, I am the better enabled to speak on this subject—[Here some noble Lords on the woolsack seemed inattentive].—I must beg, said he, that I may be heard with attention ; for though this does not interrupt me, it interrupts the House ; if I am wrong, I beg it may be pointed out to me. I have been in several districts in Devonshire, and I have found, in that one county, more waste land than there is land altogether in the county of Middlesex—[He was again interrupted].—I cannot allow noble Lords to speak so ; if they will talk, at least let me hear what they say. I have to state, that, with respect to France, since hunting in the country has been so much diminished, that is, since the Revolution, and the overthrow of the feudal system, it has been remarkably well cultivated. What a noble Lord (Auckland)—who really shifts about the House so that I do not know where to look for him—he is not now in his place—what he says as to the cultivation of France, proceeds upon a misstatement : he tells you there is no corn in France, at least not sufficient to afford any supply to this country, because M. Neckar stated some years ago that France did not, upon an average, produce quite corn enough for its own consumption ; but he should recollect, that since that period the country

has been materially changed, the land has experienced a higher degree of cultivation, and that cultivation has been accelerated by the labour of the women as well as the men. The people of France have been much diminished by emigration and war; therefore it is to be presumed, that with their decreased population and increased state of agriculture, they may have corn to spare for exportation. Besides, look to the rich and fertile countries along the Rhine, that did not belong to France at the time when M. Neckar wrote; and it is very material here to observe, that those fertile countries along the Rhine communicate to Great Britain by water carriage, and that from their not having been able, on account of the war, to carry their produce by sea to other countries, nor to the south of France, there is every reason to think that corn might be procured in great quantities from those countries, to relieve the present alarming scarcity in Great Britain. What I mean to offer as an argument from this is, that if you take the produce of the whole cultivated land of Great Britain, and the whole cultivated land of new France, that is to say, of the whole country, extending from the Pyrenees to the Rhine, and from the English Channel to the Alps, to the same market, the amount of the latter would be six times as much as the former; so that the produce of the land of France is upwards of 200,000,000*l.* more than that of England and its dependencies, including also the 14,000,000*l.* stated by Mr. Rose as the balance of trade in our favour. Consequently, giving ourselves all the benefit of our trade, and supposing France to have none at all, still the advantage in favour of the Republic is considerably above ten to three. Then, I ask, what ground is there for stating France as a ruined country, and incapable of carrying on the war? Suppose two men of equal income, and one of them lives as France does, that is, lives within his, while the other, like England, exceeds it; can these be put in competition with each other, as to whose finances will hold the longer? Besides, if there are two men of equal income, and one pays 6*l.* 10*s.* a year for every 10*s.* which the other pays, is there any comparison between them? Is not the man who pays no tythes more capable of supporting himself than he who does pay them (as is the case in England)? Then, as to the assistance you can derive from national lands, you have none. Again, suppose two men, one with a clear unencumbered estate, and another with a mortgaged one, can they spend upon the same system? Must not the man with the mortgaged estate be first exhausted? And the national debt is clearly an enormous mortgage on the lands of England. Whereas the French, by carrying on the war without borrowing any con-

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considerable sum, are in that respect in a much better situation than Great Britain. If this is not palpable, then there is no truth in arithmetic, or in figures. Now let Ministers laugh. Now let them tell the House, that the burdens of the people of France bear any proportion to ours. I shall now proceed to consider the consequences of continuing the war. The first object that presents itself is your increased and incalculable expences. I assert, that utter and inevitable ruin awaits the country, if you go on with the war. When the people of France are paying 10s. a head, and those in this country 6l. 10s. will it not have a very material effect upon your manufactures as soon as peace arrives, and then enable all nations to trade without interruption? How can you contend against France, while the price of labour is at so enormous a rate? How is it possible you can prevent her from underselling you in the markets? I will give you an instance—Your Lordships know that some of the articles of trade of this country were used to be exported duty free, before this war; sugars, from the West Indies, were exported without paying any tax. But there was to be a war, not for the deliverance of England, for she did not require to be delivered, but for the deliverance of Europe—such a deliverance as that of Jerusalem at the time of the crusades; for I look upon the deliverance of Europe, and that of Jerusalem by the crusades, as nearly similar. Our precipitate Ministers wisely thought, if Europe was to be delivered, she ought to pay for her own deliverance—then how to make her? Why, in the shape of sugar. It was not considered as a very sweet measure by those who felt the effects of it; and, my Lords, the people on the other side of the water are as cunning as those on this. What did they say to it? They said, we will go as neutral traders to the French Islands, get their sugars, and undersell you in Europe. What was the consequence of this? At Hamburgh large quantities of English sugars remained unsold in the warehouses, to the amount in value (as I have been well informed by one of the first merchants in the city) of between 9 and 10,000,000l. sterling, wasting in quality as well as in quantity, and the merchants were compelled to become bankrupts. My Lords, depend upon it, whenever by imposing taxes you contrive to raise the price of labour, the French will undersell you after peace is made; and then what becomes of your 14,000,000l. the balance of trade in your favour? If the French should be able to undersell you, supposing you were to make peace to-morrow, what must you not expect if this war is to be continued? What, but certain ruin to your trade? When we see the present situation of things in this country, I should like to know how taxes

are to be procured? The best part of the property of the people is already absorbed. Can you lay more taxes on them? Tell me, where are you to get revenue? Previously to the American war, the father of the present Secretary of State asked, "Where can you get revenue?" for that Minister supposed, even then, that the country was so grievously taxed, that it was impossible to raise more revenue in Great Britain. That Minister, however, was mistaken; and proceeding upon his mistake, he formed the plan of laying taxes upon America; but instead of finding revenue, America was lost altogether to this country. Yet we are insulted with false statements of the prosperity of this country, and with the flourishing statements of Government revenue; for I confess that it fills my mind with horror, when I hear men talk of a flourishing Government revenue, which means in reality nothing more than an enormous load of taxes, and a preposterous system of taxation. There is infinitely more wisdom in the American Government, which makes it a boast that its expences do not exceed 200,000*l.* annually, than there is in the Government of this country, which makes it a boast that it is 40,000,000*l.* To talk of national prosperity when the expence of a Government is so inordinate, is an insult to common sense. Let us therefore hear no more of this vapouring about a flourishing Government revenue: it is like a man with a fine noble mansion (and England would have been a fine noble mansion, had it not been for mismanagement and wars), who should be absurd enough to say, Oh! I am mighty well off; no man can be in a more flourishing situation; I have a grand house to live in, every thing comfortable, and I have amongst its timbers *a most flourishing dry rat*. Having sufficiently detained your Lordships on the subject of finance, and offered arguments enough to make it your duty to enter upon inquiry, I shall now offer you my reasons for wishing to make peace, and prevent that dreadful evil which war has introduced into the country in the shape of famine. I agree that it is the failure of the harvest, and the very short crops, that produced the scarcity; but the extent of that calamity is occasioned by the war; and, my Lords, for my opinion I will give you *seven* reasons—[A laugh throughout the House]—I will state my reasons in detail; for notwithstanding this laugh, I hold it to be the duty of Ministers (whom I challenge either to contradict my assertions, or to answer the arguments which I shall use) to state to the House what they conceive to be the facts, in order that false alarms may not go abroad in consequence of what I shall advance. Although the present scarcity was produced by the last scanty crop; yet the extent of it, so as to produce the danger of spreading famine, has

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been produced by the war, for the seven following reasons:—In the first place, Provisions are wasted and consumed in time of war, to an extent that no man will pretend to say they are in time of peace. Secondly, There is a considerable decrease in the operations of agriculture, by taking so many men from their labours in the field to fill up the army and the navy. Thirdly, Because the war has been a check throughout the kingdom, as well as in Devonshire, to which I have particularly alluded, to that cultivation of waste lands which would most undoubtedly have taken place if it had not been for the war. Fourthly, The effect the war has towards producing the failure of large and extensive commercial houses: for, had it not been for the war, you would not have had the tax on sugars; and if you had not had that tax, you would not have been underfold by other countries, and consequently you would not have had so many failures: there would then have been more private capital in this country, which might have been employed in procuring corn from abroad. Fifthly, It is most clear, that the public revenue, which has been prodigally expended in expeditions to the Continent, in building barracks, and in subsidizing foreign powers, might have been better and more usefully employed in purchasing a sufficient stock of corn, and in building granaries to store it, by which means we might have been enabled to have met the present scarcity without inconvenience. My Lords, I know something of granaries, in consequence of having been formerly at Geneva, where, in time of cheapness, they lay their corn in granaries, in order that, when they are visited by scarcity, they may be enabled to sell it to the people at a cheap rate. You will ask how they preserve it? I will tell you. It has been said, Parliamentary regulations on this subject are improper; but I wish there was a Parliamentary regulation with regard to what I am going to mention. My Lords, there are means of drying wheat made use of in Geneva by which they can keep it fifty years; when you dry it and expel the moisture from it, it is no longer capable of corruption. I have ate bread made of wheat that has been kept that time, and it has been extremely palatable, as much so as any other. Instead, then, of wasting the public money in absurd expeditions to Holland, and building barracks and filling them with soldiers, endeavour to expedite a peace, build granaries, and fill them with corn. Sixthly, War renders it necessary you should take up, for the conveyance of troops, ships that ought to be employed in bringing corn from abroad; there are plenty of places in the Netherlands whence you could have a supply. And, Seventhly, This unfortunate war has shut up the ports of those countries that could

supply you; by peace you will open them, and restore plenty. Let me observe one thing, if it was known that this scarcity was likely to have existed, measures ought to have been proposed at the beginning of Parliament.

"The Most Reverend Prelate who proposed his resolutions this night has unfortunately come too late. If there was ground for alarm, it was unbecoming in Ministers to be squabbling about creating false alarms in the country; it was their duty to have come sooner to Parliament. I repeat that the extent of the scarcity arises from the war. Without the war you might have had a scarcity; but you could have had no prospect of a famine. If you go on with the war, in spite of the melancholy forebodings you have had of its consequences; if you go on, and such a thing as a serious scarcity and famine should take place, and that should produce a political convulsion, it will be a dear calamity to a country like England. A political convulsion in a country with a Government like this, depending for support and protection upon its agriculture, its navy, its commerce, and paper credit, cannot take place with impunity to those whose misconduct shall have produced it. This country is like a curious, finely-wrought instrument; you cannot throw it into a state of anarchy, without destroying it entirely. It is not merely the poor manufacturer or industrious artizan that will suffer; every description of men in the country, whatever may be their rank, will feel the miseries attendant on this country being convulsed. A noble Lord near the Chancellor (Liverpool) has stated, that vast quantities of corn have been imported annually these last seven years. I pricked up my ears at these words, my Lords, for that is the exact duration of this war. What is to be inferred from this? that you have had short harvests before; you had reason to expect a repetition of them. You ought therefore to have guarded against the evil before it arrived; and for not doing so, Ministers are answerable to God and to their country. My Lords, for my part, I love the true principles of the Constitution of my country; but I know it has its abuses, and I wish to see those abuses corrected. There are men, even now, who profess to be so fond of it, so attached even to its abuses, that they will not consent to have them removed; let me ask what benefit can we derive from our Constitution when the Habeas Corpus Act is suspended? What are, I will ask any man of common sense, the benefits which we can possibly derive from this boasted Constitution, if, by means of famine hereafter raging throughout the land, we should thereby be involved in anarchy, chaos, and confusion? I am come down to this House to implore your Lordships most earnestly, and upon my knees, to

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put an end to the calamities of this cruel war, to preserve the country, and to save the people. My Lords, Ministers cannot say these things were not foreseen. I desire to have the Protest of Earl Stanhope, of Friday, February 1, 1793, read."

The following Protest was then read:—

"DISSENTIENT,

"1st, Because war is a state so unnatural, so barbarous in itself, so calamitous in its effects, so immoral when unnecessary, and so atrocious when unjust, that every friend of humanity should endeavour to avoid it; and the establishment of a pacific system ought to be the first policy of a wise and enlightened nation.

"2dly, Because peace is always for the interest of the common people in all countries; and Great Britain and France, from their peculiar situation, have an evident interest to remain at peace with each other.

"3dly, Because it is a well-known fact that the people in France are, in general, extremely desirous to maintain and strengthen between that country and this, the bonds of amity and friendship. And ever since the overthrow of despotism in France, the commonality in that nation have such irresistible weight that we might rest assured, that as peace with Great Britain is for the interest, and is the wish of the people of France, it would therefore be the constant object of their Government, if not first provoked by our Ministers, by such acts as the sending away the French Ambassador, and expressly refusing to acknowledge their new Government.

"4thly, Because the old, despotic, and detestable Government in France, from its secrecy, its perfidy, treachery, and restless ambition, has been the fatal cause of many wars in Europe for several centuries past. Therefore, any assistance given on the part of our Government, to any power in Europe that is endeavouring to restore that tyrannical form of Government in France, is injurious to the true interests of this country. And the people of France have, moreover, as just a right to enjoy civil liberty, as ourselves.

"5thly, Because a war with France is at present most impolitic, extremely dangerous to our allies the Dutch, hazardous with respect to the internal peace and external power of this country, and is likely to be highly injurious to our commerce, which is the great source of our wealth, naval strength, and prosperity. And any material interruption to the trade, manufactures, and industry of this kingdom, may at this time be attended with consequences the most fatal. The war may, therefore, prove to be a war against our commerce and manufactures, against the proprietors of our

funds, against our paper currency, and against every description of property in this country.

“ 6thly, Because every man of feeling must exceedingly lament the numerous taxes and oppressive burdens already borne by the people of this kingdom, and also the present high price of various necessary articles of life; and if an unwise system of policy be pursued, it must inevitably increase those burthens, and eventually put those necessities of life beyond the reach of the laborious part of the community.

“ And 7thly, Because these misfortunes ought the more to be deprecated, as it clearly appears that it would still be most easy to avoid them, if our Ministers were to prefer a mild, just, and pacific system, to the horrors of war, carnage, and devastation.

(Signed) STANHOPE.”

“ My 7th reason (said he) is contained in my Protest: every man must lament the numerous taxes borne in this kingdom, and the high price of provisions. What I formerly prophesied has come to pass; and I repeat, that if you continue the war, you will put the necessities of life beyond the reach of the poor. Let not Ministers say they have not had warning; they have been foretold every thing that has taken place. I then conclude, that although the scarcity is owing to the visitation of God, its extent is owing to the war; let us put an end to the war, let us attempt the best and most effectual of all methods. I will state other reasons so strong and forcible, that they must be irresistible. There will be a general cry of the country for peace, if you do not make it. Perhaps you are not aware how near the period of that general cry may be; perhaps it may not be many months off. My Lords, I wish to have it understood, that what I am about to state is a positive fact: for your Lordships will find in the Report of the Corn Committee of the House of Commons, that “ by very recent information from Havre de-Grace, the crop of wheat in France is one-third less than the preceding year; the prices one-third higher; but, compared to the price in other countries, they are *very low*. Will any one assert then, that opening our ports would not be a remedy for the evil that threatens us? My Lords, I do not know whether my Lord Grenville is in the House or not; but I wish him to hear what I am going to say. I am going to charge him and His Majesty’s Ministers, that they either unintentionally deceive themselves, or intencionally deceive this House, though I hope they may be able to prove to your Lordships that their errors arise from mistake. I charge them with perverting the meaning of the French decrees,

and the letters of the French Ministers, by mis-translating their language, and that in passages of the very first importance : and if any doubt whatsoever shall arise upon this subject, I will propose, that, not amongst us who oppose the war, but among the noble Lords who vote for the war, a Committee should be selected, composed of those who understand the French language, and they will soon be sensible how the sentiments expressed on the part of France have been altered and misrepresented. If they have done so wilfully, I know of no guilt that can equal theirs ; for to set the people of two nations to cut each others throats, by unjustly exasperating them against each other, is the measure of human delinquency. But even if (as I hope was the case) such gross mis-translations were not intentional, they are instances of very culpable neglect. It is essential that I should call your Lordships attention to the following translation of a note of M. Chauvelin, the French Ambassador, to Lord Grenville, dated 27th December 1792.

“ On reflecting what may be the reasons which may determine His Britannic Majesty to break with the French Republic, the Executive Council has been able to find no other than a false interpretation which is given to the decree of the National Convention of 19th November. A real alarm has been occasioned by this device. It can have arisen only for want of understanding its true sense. The National Convention never meant that the French Republic should favour insurrections, should espouse the quarrels of *a few seditious persons*, or, in a word, should endeavour to excite disturbances in any neutral or friendly country whatever. Such an idea would be rejected by all the French. It cannot be imputed to the National Convention without doing it injustice. This decree then is applicable only to *those people*, who, after having acquired their liberty by conquest, may have demanded the fraternity, the assistance of the Republic, by the solemn and unequivocal expressions of the general will.

“ France ought and will respect, not only the independence of England, but even that of those of her allies, with whom she is not at war. The undersigned has therefore been charged formally to declare, that she will not attack Holland so long as that power shall, on its side, confine itself towards her, within the bounds of an exact neutrality.”

“ Now, in this translation I have to point out the misrepresentations :—The words “ *Quelques seditieux*,” in the original, should have been translated “ *some seditious persons*,”—meaning any number short of the totality. “ *Peuples*” should have been translated

not "*those people*," which in English applies only to individuals; but "*those nations*." The words "*acquis leur Liberte*," should have been translated "*acquired their Liberty*," and not "*acquired their Liberty by conquest*."

"To shew that this system of misconception or misrepresentation has been uniformly acted upon, I need only remind your Lordships that M. Talleyrand, and several other persons, came over to England in an official capacity, before the war commenced between Austria and France. There were then, however, some points in dispute between them respecting the province of Alsace, which were likely to terminate in hostilities. I took occasion to represent to M. Talleyrand the absurdity of two great nations going to war about objects so insignificant. The latter answered—that the French Government were of the same opinion, and would willingly submit their plea to the judgment of the head of the only free nation in Europe except France. He stated, and he stated with energy, that the French nation loved the people of England, because they were *free*; and, therefore, that they wished that His Majesty, the King of England, or any Commissioners by him appointed, should settle the question in dispute between Austria and France. He desired me to go to His Majesty's Ministers, to sound their dispositions, and to feel whether, by accepting the office of mediators, they would contribute to avert the calamities of war. I accepted the mission, and made the proposal to the Secretary of State.—[Here Lord Grenville said, he did not recollect the circumstance.]—You do not recollect it! but I do. Think, my Lords, what a Minister you have got, who thus forgets one of the most material and important facts that has occurred during his whole administration. This handsome proposal, on the part of France, was not accepted. My reason for mentioning this fact is, to convince the House that the French were heartily disposed to shew the British Government, and the British nation, every mark of possible respect. For what can be a greater degree of respect and confidence shewn either to a nation, a government, or an individual, than voluntarily to propose to abide by their decision.

"Now, my Lords, I know it is unparliamentary to allude to discussions that have already taken place in this House; but I will suppose that somebody said in public, on the subject of Bonaparte's late overtures for peace, that his answer by the first letter of the French Consul was justified to Talleyrand's. What would the House think of a Minister who should make such a declaration. But, my Lords, the same system of misrepresentation has been pursued with respect to the language of that reply. Talleyrand, in

his note, dated the 14th of January last, says—"Assailed on all sides, the Republic could not but extend universally the efforts of her defence." This has not the smallest resemblance to the proposition (which was stated to be so infamous on the part of France), that France claimed a right to attack *every* country, if she was attacked by *any other*. Here there is another instance of palpable misrepresentation; the tendency of which is, to excite hatred and animosity between two nations which ought to live at peace with each other. My Lords, there is one circumstance so extremely important, that I must advert to it, I mean the neutrality of Prussia. On this subject, a variety of arguments against the continuance of the war present themselves. The wise, the prudent policy of its King, who has maintained his ground and preserved his people in peace, is worthy of admiration. As a proof of his wisdom, there is one late act of his, which, if originated with himself, shews him a greater Prince than any since the days of Alfred; or, if it flowed from his Minister, proves the wisdom of that Minister (for it was the suggestion of a most enlightened mind, the advice of a philosopher). This great Prince, then, writes a letter to his first Minister to the following effect. You will call it a Jacobinical letter, and condemn it as containing Democratical principles: but I say, its principles do honour to human nature. The letter, my Lords, began thus:—"I am determined that my subjects, whether rich or poor, shall be educated alike." Not that different professions shall not pursue different courses of study; but that all his subjects, of every description, shall receive one common elementary education. This will eradicate prejudice; this will destroy vanity and pride. This will teach the nobility to respect the lower orders; for, when boys are educated together, they will, when men, consider themselves as equals. This will teach the great that men have rights; it will give them an habitual respect for the "eternal, sacred, immutable, imprescriptible, and unalienable Rights of Man." Yes, men have rights, and I will maintain them, though, for so doing, I may be called a Jacobin: but if I am to be so called, I shall have the satisfaction to boast myself to be such a Jacobin as the late Earl of Chatham, such a Jacobin as the late Mr. Dunning, and such a Jacobin as the late Sir George Saville! With such Jacobins it has been my pride to act, and with such it will be my pride to continue to act. Nor is this a mere profession of the King of Prussia. No, he declares it with an energy and zeal, that demonstrates a favourite measure, and a fixed resolve to carry it immediately into execution. For such an act the King of Prussia deserves the thanks of every enlightened mind. It is one of the grandest

things I ever heard of. When Kings act thus, they deserve the love and obedience of their subjects. My Lords, when they act upon a contrary principle, they deserve to be despised. My Lords, I am so much exhausted, and have taken up so much of your Lordships time, that I shall only notice one subject more, and that briefly; I mean the negotiations at Lisle and Paris. The noble Lord who took an active part in them is present; but in any thing I shall say I can mean no reflection upon him; he was only the agent, the attorney in the business; but what I shall say will apply to the principal, I mean his neighbour at his side, the Secretary of State.—[Lord Malmesbury and Lord Grenville were sitting near each other.]—When the negotiation was opened, the English Minister said, we will have reciprocal proportionate restitution; this was admitted, and of course it became the basis on which both parties were to treat. But how did he proceed? After this point was settled, he says to the French, who had annexed Belgium and conquered to the Rhine, No, we will not have proportionate restitution; no, we must proceed on the *status ante bellum*; you must give up all your conquests, and we will restore the paltry islands which we have taken from you. Now how do I prove this? After the first basis was agreed upon, his Lordship (Lord Grenville) sent a secret letter to Lord Malmesbury. Yes, there they let the cat out of the bag; I do not mean Lord Malmesbury. No, no, it was Lord Grenville's fault; Lord Malmesbury did not wish to let puffs out. And what says puffs?—[Here his Lordship read an extract of the letter, changing the basis, and adopting the principle of the *status ante bellum*.]—Now try this proceeding by the case of individuals. Suppose two gentlemen should agree to exchange estates, acre for acre, and after the bargain made, one of them should say, No, I reject these terms, I must have ten acres for one. I say this is precisely the case; I do not say how such conduct may be considered among Ministers, but between two men I do say it would be rank rascality. It was right then, I contend, to send such a Minister away in forty-eight hours; and had they sent him packing in twenty-four, it was only what they ought to have done. But what did they do afterwards? they sent the same agent again to Lisle. This was the second time he was employed on the same errand as a mere messenger, for he had not full powers to negotiate. Were there no other obstacle than the single circumstance of sending the same person, it was evidently very impossible the business should succeed. In the case of the two individuals, which I have adduced in illustration of my argument, would the same attorney who was the agent in breaking the bargain, be the most likely to be employed with success be-

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between the same parties in any future transaction? No, he would be always suspected by the party who conceived himself injured. Without any proof then, I say, from the very beginning, there never was a real and sincere exertion for peace: no, the object was to gull the people of England. Ministers made loud complaints—they said to the people of England, there is Lord Malmesbury treated with insult and disgrace, ordered to quit Paris in forty-eight hours. Will you submit to such treatment or such indignity? This was the way they gulled the people; but the eighty thousand incorrigible Jacobins, of whom I am one, will henceforth take care that Ministers shall never gull the people so again." His Lordship concluded with moving an address, of which the following is the substance:—

"That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, representing the horrors of war; that in all countries a state of peace is ever the interest of the people, and the shedding of blood, without absolute necessity, repugnant to humanity; and farther representing, that the present war has been expensive beyond example, productive of a great increase of the national debt, of taxes to an enormous amount, and of an alarming increase in the price of all the necessities of life; and farther representing, that peace is necessary to avert the impending danger of famine; for although the present scarcity is in the first instance occasioned by the scanty harvest, the extent of the evil arises from the war; and that it is the duty of this House strongly to dissuade His Majesty from the continuance of the war for the restoration of the antient line of Princes of the House of Bourbon to the Throne of France; and to entreat, that a negotiation may be immediately opened for peace with the French Republic."

The LORD CHANCELLOR left the woolfack, not, he said, to observe upon any of the arguments used by the noble Earl in the course of his speech, but to take notice of a matter that took place in one part of it, which was in the highest degree irregular and disorderly. He would first point out to the House what the breach of order was, and then state the reason why he had not interrupted the noble Earl, and prevented it, by stopping him the instant he had attempted to be guilty of it. The instance of irregularity was this: The noble Earl had caused to be read from the Journals, an extract from a Protest of his own, as an illustration of his argument, and the ground of his motion. Nothing could be more contrary to the forms of the House than such a proceeding; undoubtedly it was the privilege of every noble Lord to put on the Journals, whatever

he thought proper to sign with his name as his Protest against any measure that had passed the House, within four-and-twenty hours of his entering it. But it was extremely irregular to call for any part of a protest to be read in a debate, from the Journals, as if the privilege of entering it made it wear the authority of the proceedings of the House itself. Had it been any other noble Lord's Protest but that of the noble Earl, he certainly should have immediately prevented its being read; but the reason why he had not taken notice of it at the proper moment was, because he did not feel it necessary to interrupt (what their Lordships had heard, sometimes with good humour, sometimes with gravity, but throughout with great patience) the visitation of God, which their Lordships had that night witnessed.

Earl STANHOPE said, he must contend that he had not been out of order in reading an extract from his own Protest, as the noble and learned Lord had asserted, because he had known a precedent for it. He recollected a Protest being ordered to be read, and no objection whatever had been made to it.

The question being put on the Address, the House divided—Contents, 2; Not Contents, 26.—Adjourned.

The two noble Peers who divided for the motion were, Earl Stanhope and Lord Camelford.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, February 20.

A petition was presented from Sir George Pigot, of Patshull, in the county of Stafford, Baronet, in behalf of himself and others; setting forth, that the late Lord Pigot, Governor of Fort St. George, brought over with him when he returned from the British settlement in India, a diamond, which for weight, lustre, and beauty, has been esteemed by the most skilful judges of diamonds to be equal in value to any known diamond in Europe; and that upon the death of Lord Pigot this diamond became the joint property of Sir Robert Pigot, the petitioner's father, of Admiral Pigot, and of his sister, Mrs. Margaret Fisher; and on the death of Sir Robert Pigot, and Admiral Pigot, the said diamond became the joint property of Sir George Pigot, Baronet, Mrs. Margaret Fisher, and Mrs. Frances Pigot, the late Admiral's widow, and his five children; but that, owing to the great value of this diamond, no individual has been enabled to purchase it, although offered for sale much

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under its estimated value; so that the petitioner and his family have, on account of such inability to sell the same, lost all the benefit that they might have derived from such diamond, had they been able to have sold the same; and that the said diamond has been offered for sale for the space of thirty-six years; nor has the petitioner any prospect of selling and disposing of the same, except by way of lottery or chance; and therefore praying, that leave may be given to bring in a bill to enable him to dispose of the said diamond by way of lottery or chance, &c.

The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

The **SPEAKER** went to the House of Lords. When he returned, he said that he had heard the royal assent given by commission to the Annual Indemnity Bill, and the bill for prohibiting bread to be sold before it is twenty-four hours old.

Mr. **LONG** presented the estimates of the sums that would be necessary for the foreign and secret service for the year 1800, and of the sum expended in the maintenance of French emigrants during the year 1799, beyond what had been voted by Parliament for that purpose.

The act for stopping for a limited time the Scotch Distilleries being read by the clerk, Mr. **Rose** moved for leave to bring in a bill for continuing the said act. Leave granted.

A bill to prohibit the making of Low Wines in Scotland, from Wheat, Barley, Oats, &c. was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

A Messenger from the Tax-office brought up an account of the amount of the Income Tax, and several other public accounts. Ordered to lie on the table.

The order of the day being read for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider the Marine Mutiny Bill, the House resolved itself accordingly.

Several amendments being proposed and agreed to, the House was resumed, and the Report ordered to be brought up to-morrow.

Friday, February 21.

Mr. **MANNING** brought in a bill for making Wet Docks and other works for improving the Port of London, which was read a first time.

A message from the Lords, by Mr. **Leeds** and Mr. **Pepys**; that the Lords had commanded them to acquaint this House, that the Lords had come to the following resolution and agreement, *videlicet*;

"Resolved, by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, That, in consequence of the high price and deficient supply of wheat and other grain, it is expedient to adopt such measures as may be practicable for diminishing the consumption thereof during the continuance of the present pressure, and for introducing the use of such articles as may conveniently be substituted in the place thereof."

AGREEMENT.

"In consequence of the high price of grain, and the evils arising therefrom, we, the undersigned, agree, That, until the 10th day of October next, we will not consume, nor permit to be consumed, in any week, within our respective families, more wheaten bread than in the proportion of one quartern loaf for each of the individuals of whom our said families may be composed; and also, that, during the said period, we will discontinue, and cause to be discontinued, within our said families, all pastry."

And then the Messengers withdrew.

"Ordered, That the said Resolution and Agreement be referred to the consideration of the Committee of the whole House, to whom it is referred, to consider further of the Report which was made from the Committee appointed to consider of means for rendering more effectual the provisions of an act made in the thirteenth year of the reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for better regulating the Assize and making of Bread," and who were instructed to consider of the most effectual means of remedying any inconveniences which may arise from the deficiency of the last crop of grain."

The order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider of extending the term of the charter of the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, granted and confirmed to them by an act made in the twenty-first year of the reign of his present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for establishing an agreement with the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, for advancing the sum of two millions, towards the supply for the service of the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty-one," being read,

The House resolved itself into the said Committee; and, after some time spent therein, Mr. Speaker resumed the chair, and Mr. Bragge reported from the Committee, that they had received a proposal from the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, relating to the matter referred to the said Committee, and had come to a resolution thereupon, both which the Committee had

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directed him to report, when the House will please to receive the same.

Ordered, That the Report be now received.

Mr. Bragge accordingly reported from the said Committee the said proposal and resolution; and he read the Report in his place, and afterwards delivered it in at the table, where the proposal and resolution were read, as follow, viz.

To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain, in Parliament assembled.

The Governor and Company of the Bank of England humbly propose,

“ That, in consideration of the advance of three millions sterling, in the manner, for the period, and upon the terms hereinafter mentioned, they be continued a corporation, with the sole power and privilege of banking, for the term of twenty-one years, from the first day of August one thousand eight hundred and twelve, with all abilities, capacities, powers, authorities, franchises, immunities, exemptions, privileges, profits, emoluments, benefits, and advantages, which they now have, possess, or enjoy by virtue or in pursuance of their charter, or of any act or acts of Parliament, or of any employment by or on behalf of the Public: redeemable, nevertheless, after the expiration of the said extended term of twenty-one years from the said first day of August one thousand eight hundred and twelve, on one year's notice, and the re-payment of all the principal money and interest which shall be then due and owing to the said Governor and Company upon all such tallies, Exchequer orders, Exchequer bills, Parliamentary funds, or other Government securities, which they shall have remaining in their hands, or be entitled to at the time of such notice to be given as aforesaid; the said Governor and Company continuing a corporation, with an exclusive power of banking, notwithstanding such notice given, until all the money due to them as aforesaid shall be duly paid.

“ That, in consideration of the above proposed extension of their charter for twenty-one years, and a grant of their other privileges, employments, advantages, and immunities abovementioned, the said Governor and Company are willing to advance the sum of three millions sterling for the public service, to be paid on such days during the present year, and in such manner, as Parliament shall direct and appoint; the re-payment thereof to be secured by Exchequer bills, to be made out at the time of such advance, by virtue of an act to be passed in this Session of Parliament, and to be made payable at the expiration of six years from the date thereof, without interest; the said Exchequer bills to be charged and charge-

able upon the first aids or supplies which shall be granted by Parliament, for the service of the year one thousand eight hundred and six, and, in case sufficient aids or supplies should not be granted by Parliament for that purpose before the fifth day of April one thousand eight hundred and six, the same to be charged and chargeable upon, and to be re-paid out of the consolidated fund.

“ Provided, That the said Governor and Company shall have the option of being repaid the said sum of three millions at any time before the expiration of the said term of six years, in case the price of the three per cent. consolidated annuities shall be eighty per cent. or more, upon giving six months notice for that purpose to the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury; and upon such repayment, the said Governor and Company shall deduct or allow a discount to the Public at and after the rate of five pounds per cent. per annum on the sum repaid for such part of the said term of six years as shall then remain unexpired.

“ Sealed by order of the Court of Directors, the 13th of February 1800.

“ ROBERT BEST, Sec.

(L. S.)”

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, it was understood on a former occasion, that the subject should be brought on at this time, but that the discussion of it should be deferred to a future day, and was to take place at another stage of the proceeding: for the present he should not have occasion to detain the Committee for more than a few minutes. The advantages which the public would derive from the renewal of the charter of the Bank of England would be, the possession of three millions of money for six years without interest; the value of which would be between six and seven hundred thousand pounds. This was the mere gain upon dry calculation; but not the actual gain, nor near the amount of its probable production; for, in the first place, whether the charter of the Bank were renewed or not, this money would be wanted, together with a much larger sum: what interest was to be paid upon the rest of it must depend upon the terms on which the loan was made; nor could he say what the probable prices would be when this sum of three millions was to be replaced, or when it should begin to bear interest, because it could not be said that would be a period of peace or war. The average price between peace and war, at which it was fair to calculate the value of this loan without interest, he would estimate not higher than three per cents. at 75. If these three millions were not taken upon these terms, that money, among the rest, would necessarily be borrowed for the service of the year at the present price of the

funds. Conjectures upon this subject he admitted to be liable to uncertainty. We had reason to hope that before six years should elapse, the period for replacing these three millions, or of providing an interest for the sum, we should be delivered from the war, at which time he should conceive stock would be much higher than it is at present; but even if we should not be delivered from the war at that period, which there was every reason to hope we should, he considered this as an advantageous thing for the Public; and if it should be a period of war, he did not conceive that the three per cents. would be much below par. Whatever might be the state of the funds then, he should trust the Committee would see the propriety of making this agreement with the Bank, instead of waiting for twelve years, which was the period of the expiration of their charter. Besides these considerations, there was another and a general question, on which he should merely touch for the present; and that was a question of policy in the renewal of the charter of the Bank: gentlemen would naturally ask, whether it was right thus far to anticipate the solvency of the Bank under a recent experience of its having been unable to make payments in cash? He mentioned this as likely to be made a subject of objection by some persons; but it was so far from being an objection, in his opinion, that it decided his mind in favour of the policy of the measure now to be proposed for the renewal of the charter. The Public had derived great advantages to manufactures and to commerce by the aid of the Bank, and no doubt would do so again if any similar pressure should happen to be felt. Many thought that much calamity would follow the stoppage of payment in cash by the Bank; but that event had, among other things, convinced us of the good sense there was in placing such general confidence in the Bank, and of the real solidity of that institution. We had seen that our commerce and manufactures, instead of diminishing, had increased during the period of the restriction of payment in cash; which commerce and manufactures, he had the satisfaction to observe, were still increasing to a degree unknown to our history before this period; and therefore we ought now, with more confidence than ever, to continue the exclusive privileges of the Bank. These were the general grounds he had to submit as to the propriety of this measure; and therefore he now moved in substance, "That it is the opinion of this Committee, that the charter of the Bank of England should continue, &c. upon the terms granted to them by the twenty-first of his present Majesty, according to the proposals made by the Bank for that purpose," &c.

Mr. TIERNEY wished to know whether these proposals came from the Bank to Government, or from Government to the Bank?

Mr. Chancellor PITT.—“The proposal was made by me by letter to the Governor and Company of the Bank. That proposal was laid by them before a Court of Proprietors of Bank Stock, who agreed to it. The proposal now comes from the Bank, and my motion is to agree to that proposal.”

Mr. TIERNEY said, that what he wanted to know was, whether this matter originated with the Minister or the Bank? He understood it originated with the Minister, and that the Bank agreed to it.

Mr. Chancellor PITT.—“I addressed a letter to the Governor and Company of the Bank of England. The honourable gentleman knows the whole of this matter already; I can give him no new account of it. My letter to the Governor and Company was laid before the Proprietors: the Proprietors agreed to the terms of that letter, or to the proposal, if he pleases, coming from me. The proposal now comes to this House from the Bank. The Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of the Public, and the Governor and Company of the Bank of England on behalf of the Proprietors of the Bank, agree in opinion upon the propriety of the measure now before the Committee of the House of Commons; that is the whole history of the subject.”

Mr. TIERNEY said, that he knew these parties agreed very well, and acted together; and that this was not the first instance of their doing so.

The question was then put and carried.

The House being resumed, the resolution was reported, the report was received immediately, read, agreed to, and ordered to be taken into further consideration on Tuesday next.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR said, that in the course of a discussion which had taken place on the scarcity of grain, allusion was made to a measure of a general inclosure of waste lands. He thought that a subject of great importance, and that it ought to be discussed this Session. He thought also that some instructions should be given to the Committee to whom this subject was referred. It was his intention to submit a motion to that effect on Monday.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the order of the day for the House to go into a Committee of the whole House on the bill for suspending the Habeas Corpus.—The House in a Committee upon the bill,

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The Attorney General proposed to fill up the blanks for the duration of this bill with the first of February 1801.

Mr. TIERNEY asked, if there ever was an instance of such a measure as this being continued for a year? Should it not rather be until the next Session of Parliament, or a given time after its commencement?

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he should be glad to know whether the honourable gentleman himself thought the opinion of Parliament was likely to vary in the course of the present year? If not, was it not more fair, because more explicit, to state at once the period to which it was to extend, than to continue it only for a few months, and then to renew it on the expiration of that time?

The blank was then filled up to continue the bill until the first of February 1801.

The House being resumed, the Report was received immediately, read, agreed to, and the bill was ordered to be engrossed.

Mr. WHITBREAD moved the order of the day for the second reading of the bill to explain and amend the 5th of Elizabeth, relative to the wages of artificers, labourers, &c. The order being read, he moved, That this bill be now read a second time.

Sir W. YOUNG rose to object to the principle of the bill, as in his opinion it did not go to remedy the grievance complained of, and would eventually distress rather than relieve the poor.

Mr. SIMEON also objected, and thought, that if the evil of which the honourable Member complained did exist, the remedy proposed was not an adequate one.

Mr. WHITBREAD replied to these objections. He declared, that he saw no such evils as those which it was stated would result from the bill. He knew that there were many parishes, in which neither proprietors of large landed estates, nor gentlemen resided, but merely farmers; and where, in such cases, the cottages were underlet to the farmers. In such cases they had the poor tenants under their controul: the labourer was often under-paid, whilst with his family he found it impossible to remove; and the farmer, knowing this, took an undue advantage of the poor man's situation. Mr. Whitbread said, he was not in the House when the Corn Bill was debated; but he would take that opportunity of throwing it out for the consideration of His Majesty's Ministers, as the army had an allowance of bread, whether some substitutes should not be provided for the soldiery in this time of scarcity.

Lord BELGRAVE opposed the motion. If carried, he thought those engaged in commerce would have cause to complain that the agricultural interests were more attended to than theirs. For his

part, he felt very reluctant to introduce legislative restrictions, either with respect to corn or agriculture. He proposed as an amendment, that "the word *now* be left out of the motion."

Mr. ELLISON objected to the bill upon similar grounds.

Mr. MARTIN expressed his hopes that something would be done for the relief of the poor labourer. He lamented that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given up the plan he had once brought forward respecting the poor.

On the question that the word *now* stand part of the motion, it was carried in the negative. It was then moved and carried, that the bill be read a second time on this day six months.—Thus the bill is lost for this Session.

In a Committee of Supply,

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the Army Extraordinaries in the shape of Resolutions as follows :

Army Extraordinaries for the year 1800	-	£. 2,500,000
Deficiency in former Grants	- - - - -	447,000
Secret Services	- - - - -	150,000
To make good the like Sum pursuant to Addresses,		
and not yet made good	- - - - -	26,203
Relief of suffering Clergy of France and American		
Loyalists	- - - - -	242,798
Relief of Emigrant Clergy and Emigrants	- - -	7,574
Civil Establishment of Upper Canada	- - -	7,950
Ditto, Nova Scotia	- - - - -	5,540
Ditto, New Brunswick	- - - - -	4,460
Ditto, Island of St. John's America	- - - - -	1,700
Ditto, Cape Breton	- - - - -	1,840
Ditto, Newfoundland	- - - - -	1,640
Ditto, Bahama Islands	- - - - -	4,100
Ditto, Bermuda	- - - - -	580
Ditto, Dominica	- - - - -	600
Ditto, New South Wales	- - - - -	630,916
Bills drawn on the Lords of the Treasury from New		
South Wales, and not yet come to hand	- -	24,074
Charge for superintending Aliens	- - - -	6,369
Convicts at home	- - - - -	32,535

The House resumed, the Report was brought up, and ordered to be received on Monday.

Mr. ROSE brought up the Scots' Distillery Bill, which was read a first and second time, and ordered to be committed on Monday.

Monday, February 24.

The Right Honourable the LORD MAYOR presented to the House a petition of His Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Liverymen, of the city of London, at the Guildhall of the said city, the 19th day of February 1800, in common hall assembled; setting forth, "That the petitioners deeply lament the calamities inseparable from a state of war, but more particularly those which have resulted from the present conflict, because they conceive it to have been more indefinite in its object, and devastating in its progress, than any war this country has hitherto been engaged in; and that the petitioners deprecate wars undertaken either for the secret or avowed purpose of imposing a government on another country, or in any manner interfering in its internal concerns; and that, impressed with these considerations, they have not in any instance sanctioned or approved of the present war, but, on the contrary, have, by instructions to their representatives in Parliament, by petitions addressed to His Majesty, and to the House, endeavoured to stop that effusion of human blood with which Europe has so long been deluged; and that, in their petition presented to the House so far back as the 26th of January 1795, among other things, they stated it as their opinion, that none of the ends proposed by the present war had been or appeared likely to be obtained; and that in their said petition they further declared it to be their decided conviction, from their view of public measures, that the principle upon which the war appeared then to be carried on neither was, nor could be, essential to the prosperity, the liberty, or the glory of the British empire; and humbly praying that the House, disclaiming all right of interfering in the internal concerns of France, would be pleased to take such measures as they in their wisdom should think proper, for the purpose of promoting a speedy peace between Great Britain and the powers with whom we are now at war; and that, to the inexpressible concern and disappointment of the petitioners, the war was unfortunately persisted in, and more than five years have elapsed since that period, during which time the fears and apprehensions which they then expressed to the House have not only been realised but greatly exceeded, a series of the most melancholy events and unexampled misfortunes have ensued; the petitioners forbear to detail the long and bloody catalogue of disasters which have attended the war, with the various expensive and destructive expeditions we have been engaged in, which have produced the most serious effects upon the commerce and manufactories of the

country; the petitioners will not enumerate the long train of afflicting events attending the late unhappy rebellion in Ireland, and the present distracted and unsettled state of that country; neither will they dwell upon the exorbitant price of provisions, which bears so hard upon the middle and poorer classes of the people, already borne down with an intolerable pressure of taxation, all which circumstances separately, and combinedly, powerfully solicit the return of peace; and that, in this alarming situation of public affairs, it is with the deepest regret they have observed the overtures of the French Consul for terminating hostilities rejected by His Majesty's Councils, and a design more openly avowed than at any former period of prosecuting the war for the purpose of restoring to the Government of France the ancient line of the Bourbon family; the petitioners are the more astonished at such a proceeding, because they did not conceive it possible that, after a bitter and unavailing conflict of seven years, after a sacrifice of so many thousands of lives and so many millions of money, His Majesty's Ministers could want the result of experience and the evidence of facts to demonstrate to them the impracticability of a project so utterly incompatible with the true interests of these kingdoms; the petitioners cannot sufficiently impress upon the House the impolicy of persevering in a contest which, even if it were to prove successful, appears to be principally calculated for the aggrandisement of our allies, who have nevertheless, on different occasions, shewn no reluctance to conclude a peace, and whose exertions, even in their own cause, can only be procured by the lavish expenditure of this devoted country; and, conceiving that no adequate advantage can arise from a further prosecution of hostilities, and that the present period is highly favourable to negotiation, the petitioners pray, that the House will take such measures as they in their wisdom may think proper, towards promoting an immediate negotiation with the Government of France, for the purpose of restoring to His Majesty's subjects the blessings of peace, as soon as it can be obtained on safe and honourable terms."

Mr. Alderman ANDERSON said, he rose merely to state, that the petition in question was not the petition of the Livery of London; it was the petition of a faction, and he trusted of a very small faction of that respectable body. He was happy to say that it was signed by no more than fifty-seven names. On Wednesday, when the question was put in the common hall for petitioning the House of Commons for peace, he was confident that it was carried in the negative. The Chief Magistrate, however, thought fit to say that it was carried in the affirmative. Upon that, a great dis-

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turbance arose ; and, as many were discontented with the decision which had been given, it was proposed to divide the hall. It was not above two thirds full, and the measure might have been easily executed : however, this proposal was rejected, and another plan adopted ; the Lord Mayor said, that as there was a difference of opinion as to the true sense of the hall, he would put the question a second time, and choose two persons to assist him with their opinion as to the result of it. At that moment the beadles and constables all left their posts, rushed into the hall, and were followed by a promiscuous rabble.* The second time, he allowed, the mo-

** In consequence of this assertion, the following declarations and affidavits were made. The first is a letter from Mr. Temple, the Hall-keeper, to the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor :*

" My Lord,

" Guildhall, London, Feb. 26.

" I have considered the question put by your Lordship to me this day, and can with great truth say, that I did, on the 18th of this instant February, receive from your Lordship written instructions to keep the gates of Guildhall locked up on Wednesday the 19th, till the City Marshals came and took possession, to prevent improper persons from going in : and that in obedience to such instructions I did lock the gates on the said 19th instant, and kept them so locked till about half an hour after eleven o'clock, when the City Marshals came and took possession of the doors ; and farther, that I have been eight years keeper of the said Guildhall, during which time I have seen many Common Halls, but do not remember to have seen any that had more the appearance of being entirely composed of Liverymen, or that was conducted with more decorum. And that during the said Common Hall being held, I was going about the hall at various times, but I did not at any time perceive any mob or body of people whatever rush into the hall, nor hear from any other person that such a circumstance had happened. And in farther compliance with your Lordship's wish, I have no objection to attest the truth of the above representation upon oath if required.

" I remain, Sir, &c.

GEORGE TEMPLE.

" To the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor."

" I George Temple do hereby solemnly swear, that the above representation, signed by me, is a faithful statement of the proceedings therein referred to.

" Sworn at Guildhall, London, this
28th day of February 1800, before
me,

GEORGE TEMPLE."

JOHN PERRING."

" John Brodley, one of the Under Marshalmen of the city of London, maketh oath, and faith, that he was employed by the principal Marshal to keep the main door of the Guildhall on Wednesday the 19th instant, for the purpose of preventing improper persons from getting into the common hall on that day. That he was at the said main door when it was first opened, and continued there until near three o'clock. That the beadles of the

tion was carried by a decided majority ; but who composed that majority, the House from these circumstances would judge. A poll was then demanded, but refused, because the law officers had said that such a step was unprecedented. The Recorder was not present ; and the Common Serjeant, &c. had merely said that they had never seen such a thing, but that there was no law against it, and it lay entirely with the Lord Mayor whether it should take place or not. There could be no doubt that a great majority of the Livery were against the motion, and this would have appeared had a poll been taken. The only measure now left by which they might show their real sentiments was to draw up a counter-petition. That had been drawn up, was already signed by more than 700, and would be presented to the House in a few days.

The LORD MAYOR said, that he trusted it would be found that he had endeavoured to discharge his duty on that occasion with the utmost impartiality ; and though he was free to confess, that his opinion, as an individual, was in favour of the petition he had just presented, yet he was determined not to yield to his partiality ; nay, if there had been even a doubt of the number on each side, he would have leaned to that which was by no means consonant to his feelings, or the political opinions on which he acted. He considered himself in that situation which the Speaker was in, in the House of Commons. On the first shew of hands he had no doubt in his mind that the majority was in favour of the present petition ; but

different companies were within his view ; and that they did not quit their posts until a very considerable time after the second shew of hands was taken ; and that he did not see (nor could it possibly happen without his seeing it), any mob or any body of people whatever rush into the hall.

“ Sworn at the Mansion-house,
London, the 23th of February 1800, before
G. M. MACAULAY.”

JOHN BRODLEY.”

“ London, Feb. 25, 1800.

“ We whose names are hereunder written, are beadles of the several companies of the city of London, to which our names are affixed, and were appointed by our employers to attend at Guildhall on Wednesday the 19th Feb. instant, for the purpose of preventing any persons from going into the Common Hall on that day, unless they were of the Livery ; and we do declare, that we do not know that any person did go into Guildhall, while we were upon duty on that day, but Livermen. That we did not leave our stations at the door for a considerable time after the second shew of hands was taken ; and that we did not at any time perceive that any mob, or any body of people whatsoever, rushed into the hall ; nor could it be done without our knowledge.”

Signed by the BEADLES of forty-eight Companies.

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lest it should be said that he had evinced the slightest partiality—he called two of his *bitterest*—no, he would not make use of that expression, it was too harsh—but he called two gentlemen who were well known to be adverse to his political principles, and two gentlemen of opposite opinions, to assist him in the decision of the question. Those gentlemen declared that the majority was in favour of the question. Confiding in their determination, he thought himself perfectly secure from any the most distant imputation of partiality. A poll was demanded; but after some consultation with those who were well-informed on proceedings of that nature, he found that it was not the usage; and in this second instance he conceived that his impartiality was preserved. As to the paucity of signatures, he also understood, from good authority, that a few names were sufficient in point of formality. Satisfied, therefore, on these grounds, he presented the petition in obedience to the wish of that majority.

Mr. Alderman CURTIS said, that in his opinion, the honourable Baronet (Sir J. W. Anderson) was not perfectly correct with respect to the number he had stated to be in the hall at the time; for, in his opinion, there were upwards of 2,000. It was not easy to come to a decision on a show of hands. He had known his honourable friend (the Lord Mayor) near forty years in public and in private life, and could bear ample testimony to his impartiality and worth in both; and though their politics were as opposite as light and darkness, yet it was but candid to say that he discharged himself on that occasion with all the impartiality which a person could do in so arduous a situation.

Sir J. W. ANDERSON said he did not mean to accuse the right honourable gentleman of any partiality.

Mr. LUSHINGTON said, he would content himself with just saying, that the Lord Mayor did all he possibly could to rescue his character from the charge of partiality; and as a proof of such a conduct, chose two persons from each side, whose decision should determine the sense of the hall. In giving this opinion, he begged it might be considered that war was out of the question, the principles of which, he said, were just and necessary; and though in this he differed from the right honourable Member who presented the petition, he must say, that no Magistrate could conduct himself with more propriety on the occasion.

The petition was then ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. BRAGGE brought up the Report of the Committee of Supply. The resolutions were read and agreed to.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the third reading of the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that he supposed the Act would be laid on the shelf, together with the Crown of France, as there were no hopes of the one being restored without the restoration of the other. From a view of the principle, he was led to ask, whether the precaution would not be necessary when a communication, on the return of peace, was opened with France, as with a pest-house, from whence the contagion spread?

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, the ground on which the House continued the Suspension of the Act was to avoid the evils to which the honourable gentleman alluded; and should any apprehension arise of such continuing after peace, the House would take all due precaution to prevent the consequences, and would continue them unless peace had furnished of itself a sufficient security against such apprehensions. To obtain such a peace was a reason for continuing the war, the object of which he would not now discuss, as it was proposed to appoint a day for such a discussion.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH said, there had been sent to him some information of a practice, which, if true, ought to be discontinued; he meant the practice of removing to a distance from London the persons against whom warrants were issued for high treason. In that information was stated some circumstances of great misconduct under the authority of the Act for Suspending the Habeas Corpus. He had no doubt of the truth of what had been stated to him; but he had no opportunity of making inquiry into the particulars. This was a reason why the bill should not pass in its present shape.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he should be glad to know in what gaol the abuse was practised to which the honourable gentleman alluded; and he should also wish to hear the name of the person on whom the abuse was alleged to have been exercised. The statement of the honourable gentleman was a little defective; for, by it, the House could only learn, that the honourable gentleman had received some information, but had no opportunity of inquiring into the matter, or being satisfied of the truth of it.

Mr. W. SMITH said, he had had no opportunity of inquiring into the matter; but that, from the quarter from which the information came, he had no reason to doubt the truth of it. But if the House desired it, he had no objection to stating the name of the person.—[Here there was a general call for the name.]—Mr. Smith said, he had no objection to naming the person, nor to relating all the circumstances he knew.—[The House not seeming to

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with to hear the detail of the case]—Mr. Smith said, the gaol to which he alluded was the gaol of Dorchester.

The bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to the Lords.

The order of the day was then read for going into a Committee of Ways and Means, and the House went into a Committee accordingly: Mr. Bragge in the chair.

Mr. Chancellor PITT.—“Sir, I shall not detain the Committee with any preface to the account of the Supplies which have been already granted, or that remain to be granted, for the service of the current year, and of the Ways and Means for defraying the same; but shall proceed directly to state generally the sums under the several heads of which those accounts consist. There have been granted, and there remain to grant, under the head of

SUPPLY,

Navy, - - - - -	£. 12,619,000
Army, Ordinaries - - - - -	£. 8,850,000
— Extraordinaries - - - - -	2,520,000
Making together - - - - -	11,370,000
Ordnance - - - - -	1,695,000
Miscellaneous Services - - - - -	750,000

These last include the Plantation Service which has been voted this day, and the other usual miscellaneous articles. These are the chief heads of the Supply already voted. There remain the Exchequer Bills, which were granted last year, to be provided for in the present; the deficiencies upon the grants of last year; and the probable extraordinary services which a state of war may bring upon us, and which have not yet been ascertained. I therefore shall include all these sums in my account of Supply, that the Committee may have before them the whole at one view, though the whole is not yet voted. And, first,

Interest paid for sums raised by Exchequer Bills, discount for prompt payment, and sums paid to the Bank for receiving and paying Contributions, and for other services not included in the supply of 1799, but which were paid out of the monies granted for the service of that year, and which must be provided for in the current year—I make this charge, therefore, an article of Supply - - - - -	816,000
Deficiencies of the grants of 1799 - - - - -	447,000
Deficiency of the usual grant of the Land and Malt Tax - - - - -	350,000

EXCHEQUER BILLS—Under this head I must trouble the Committee for a few minutes. Gentlemen will recollect, that in consequence of the Tax on Income, credit was taken in the Ways and Means of last year for 10,000,000*l.* under this head. But in the estimate made of its probable produce after the modifications which were made of the tax, I reckoned upon no more than 7,500,000*l.* I am sorry to find, however, that this exceeds the sum which the Tax upon Income is likely to produce. According to the paper on the table, gentlemen will see that the amount of it is likely to be only 6,200,000*l.* From the number of Exchequer Bills issued on the credit of this tax, there will be to be paid off about - - - - - £. 2,500,000

Ditto—In like manner, Exchequer Bills were issued on the credit of the Aid and Contribution Act of 1798, and which exceed the produce, making a charge, which must be provided for, of - - - - - 1,075,000

Ditto—In like manner, a Vote of Credit was given last year for 3,000,000*l.* to be provided for in the Ways and Means of this year. It is my intention to vote for a like sum to be charged on the Ways and Means of the year 1801; but in the mean time, for the sake of regularity, I must include it here as an article of Supply - - - - - 3,000,000

SUBSIDIES—I cannot yet precisely ascertain the amount of the Subsidies which we shall have to pay to Foreign States, for co-operation in the war. When applied to by the gentlemen who bid for the Loan, I told them that the probable amount of the Subsidies would be - - - - - £. 2,500,000

But this was exclusive of the sum to be paid for the maintenance of Russian troops now in the British dominions, which may be about 500,000

So that I shall state the whole subsidies at - - - - - 3,000,000

These are all the specific sums which I can state, except the annual grant towards the fund for paying off the National Debt - - - - - 200,000

All these together amount to the sum of - - - - - 37,728,000

But there are still left, the amount of the Extraordinary Services to which we may be subject, and of which I cannot as yet form an accurate estimate. According to the best of my judgment, however, they are not likely to exceed 1,700,000*l.* or 1,800,000*l.*; say 1,800,000

This would make the total of the Supply for the year 1800, about - - - - - 39,500,000

WAYS AND MEANS.

I now come to the Ways and Means which are to meet this Supply. And, first, there is the usual sum to be voted under the head of

LAND and MALT - - - £. 2,750,000

LOTTERY—This is not yet ascertained, but I think I may safely expect to receive from this source the sum of - - - 200,000

EXPORTS and IMPORTS—This tax, which has been attended with such beneficial effects, may be safely relied on for the sum of - - - 1,250,000

TAX on INCOME—This great and substantial source of our finance has only produced, or rather will apparently produce, no more than about 6,200,000*l*. By the account on the table it appears, that with the sum already derived from the tax, and what may safely be reposed on from the current quarter ending the 5th of April next, the produce of it will be about 6,100,000*l*. But to this is to be added what may also safely be looked to in remittances from the distant dependencies of Great Britain; and which are not speculative or doubtful, since by the accounts of sums actually contributed or subscribed in the East Indies, though they have not yet reached the Exchequer, we may safely look to 100,000*l*. more, making the amount, for the first year of this new tax, 6,200,000*l*. It will be my duty to propose such regulations as may tend to enforce this duty; and I am convinced, from every information I have been able to obtain on the subject, that the Committee may safely look to this tax for a much larger product than it has had in 1799. When gentlemen consider that the tax is new in its principle, and that the means of enforcing the collection were, of course, not so well understood as they will be in the farther prosecution of the same plan, they will readily agree with me, that, by regulating the collection from every quarter of the country, much more may be expected. It is the fate of all new taxes to fall short the first year in which they are laid. It has, indeed, been the peculiar character of the taxes of the present war, that they have not suffered the fate incident to taxes in general; they have been uncommonly productive: this is owing, perhaps, to their being chiefly laid on articles which were understood, and the collection of which was familiar to us. This cannot be said of this new and extraordinary resource. I do not hesitate to say, that a receipt of 6, 7, or even 8,000,000*l*. in the first year, would not have satisfied me as a rule from

which we might reasonably calculate on its permanent production. That it will be augmented beyond the sum which it has produced, no man, I think, will question. That it will be augmented to the full extent of my original estimate, I certainly, for one, do not hesitate to believe. Suppose, however, that, with the regulations which will be introduced, it shall produce only the sum of

-	-	7,000,000
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From this we have to deduct the interest to be paid on the Loans for which this fund is in the first instance to be appropriated, viz. It stands charged with an interest on a loan of

8,000,000	-	£. 480,000
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Ditto 11,000,000	-	588,000
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And I propose to charge it with

13,500,000 of the present loan,	-	635,000
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Making together the sum of	-	1,663,000
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Which leaves as a sum applicable to the service of the year, about	-	5,300,000
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The next article I come to with peculiar pleasure: it is that of the

CONSOLIDATED FUND, the growing produce of which must give sincere satisfaction to every gentleman who has the prosperity of his country at heart. Arising as it does from the productive state of all the permanent taxes, it shews more than any thing else the prosperous situation of the country, and the solid security of our revenue. Gentlemen will hear with astonishment, that we may safely take the surplus of the Consolidated Fund at 5,500,000*l*. On what grounds it has risen to this sum, which will naturally strike gentlemen with surprise, I cannot presume to say. It is a proof, either that our permanent taxes are now brought to so settled a state of production as to give us confidence in the prosperity of our country; or that the new system of finance has so confirmed and satisfied the minds of men, that even the permanent sources of our revenue have been improved by this extraordinary measure of finance. Be it as it may, it holds forth a most chearful prospect to England, since we hereby ascertain the fact, that in time of peace the produce of the Consolidated Fund will be 3,000,000*l*. or 3,500,000*l*. more than the whole amount of our peace establishment; and all this sum may as truly be said to be raised within the year as the tax upon Income itself; and ought indeed, when speaking of the prosperity of the country, to be taken in the same way.

Gentlemen will observe, that in order to make out the disposable surplus of the Consolidated Fund, they must call to their minds, that by the Redemption Act of the Land Tax, the sums, as they are paid, go with their interest to the Consolidated Fund; and I estimate the quarter ending on the 5th April next to be 2,174,000l.; upon which there remains a charge for the year 1799, of 1,280,000l., leaving a surplus on the 5th of April, applicable to the service of 1800, of 894,000l. This sum will not all be received into the Exchequer at that time, because it is dependent on the measure of the extinction of the Land Tax; but I speak from the produce of the actual operation of the measure of finance. To see, therefore, the probable produce of the Consolidated Fund, we must look to the amount of the permanent taxes. It appears that the four quarters ending the 5th of January 1800, being the last period to which they can be calculated, amount to 23,791,000l. the taxes of 1799 inclusive; but these are not yet fully collected, and we may safely add, on that account, as an arrear which will come, 300,000l. making the amount of the permanent taxes, for the year, ended the 5th of January 1800, 24,091,000l. Now, the amount of the interest on our National Debt (which is 18,889,000l.), the Civil List, and every other charge to which we can be subject in a time of peace, is 19,725,000l. leaving an applicable surplus of 4,365,000l.; to which may be added a sum which we may expect to receive under the name of Imprest Monies, and of the repayment of Monies granted to the Colonies of Grenada and St. Vincent, without reference to the indulgence now under discussion, 750,000l. making a total of - - - £. 5,115,000

But upon this there will probably be another charge, for which we ought to provide in case of emergency; I mean the Interest on the Imperial Loan, which is - 497,000

4,618,000

Add to this the surplus balance which will come from the Land Tax Fund, over the appropriation of last year, - - - - 894,000

And the total of the applicable surplus of the Consolidated Fund for the year 1800, I therefore take at - - - - - 5,512,000

Exchequer Bills, proposing to issue by a Vote of Credit the same sum as we pay off, the article is to be placed here as well as on the side of the account - - - 3,000,000

BANK CHARTER—This sum is to be received from the Bank without interest, for the renewal of their charter - - - - - 3,000,000

Add to this the **LOAN** of the year (exclusive of that for Ireland - - - - - 18,500,000

And the total of the **Ways and Means** for the year will amount to - - - - - £. 39,500,000

Being the sum which I have to raise to meet the Supplies.

LOAN.

I now come, Sir, to state to the Committee the terms upon which I have been able to contract for the Loan of eighteen millions and a half. That which is raised here for the service of Ireland will, of course, be provided for in that kingdom. We have to consider the terms of the Loan, the additional charge which it makes on the Public, and the taxes by which the interest is to be paid. As to the terms, Sir, so much has been said already, and they have so forcibly attracted the public regard, that I need not trouble you with many words on the subject. I shall only say, that they are the strongest proof of the confirmation of the propriety and wisdom of the new system of finance which has been adopted; and of the solid resources of the empire. I need not say that the terms are, for every 100l. in money the contractor is to have 101l. of 3 per cent. consols, and 47l. of 3 per cents reduced. It is difficult to calculate what were the precise terms to the contractors upon which the bargain was made, since they, as well as I, were ignorant of the actual price which the stocks bore at the moment. We must look to the prices on the preceding day. Here, too, there were fluctuations; there were two distinct prices, and we must look at them both in order to see the value of the bargain. Early in the day the consols were at 61, and the reduced at $61\frac{3}{4}$: Taking them at this price, the terms would be as follow:

100l. of 3 per cent. consols, at 61, would be £. 67 2 0

47 - ditto - reduced, at 61 15, - - - 29 0 4

The discount for prompt payment, according to the rate previously agreed on, must be added to this in fairness, and it is calculated to amount to 2 16 7

So that, for every 100l. in money, they agreed to take - - - - - 98 18 11

In this view of the contract it was surely a most advantageous bargain; but in the course of the day the stocks rose to 62; and in that view of the market the terms would stand thus:

110l. of 5 per cent. consols, at 62, would be	-	£. 68	4	0
47 - ditto - reduced, at 62 15,	- - -	29	9	10
Discount - - - - -	- - -	2	16	7

Making - - 100 10 5

So that the gentlemen, in this view of the bargain, agreed to lend their money to the Public for a bonus of 10s. 5d. Let us look at it in another way. The total amount of the interest to be permanently paid by the Public on each 100l. is

157l. of stock, at 3 per cent. - - 4l. 14s. 2½d.

So that in the eighth year of the war we have been able to raise the necessary supplies at less than four and three-fourths per cent. ; a circumstance which, more than a thousand arguments, will shew the efficacy of the plan adopted by Parliament for raising so great a part of the supplies within the year ; since by comparing these terms with the bargains which were made before the adoption of this new system, we may see the enormous benefit which we reap ; and I have great pleasure in adding that these terms, though so advantageous to the public, will be equally so to the contractors themselves.

TAXES.

I now come, Sir, to the permanent charge which is to be imposed on the Public by this Loan ; a circumstance which used always to be contemplated with such dread by the Public, and which even yet, from prejudices, has its alarm. The apprehension, however, will soon subside when they see the beneficial effect of this new system. It is my proposal, as I have said, to charge the tax upon income with the interest of 13,500,000l. and there remains only 5,000,000l., for which I have to provide by taxes.

The whole of the sum, then, to be raised by taxes, is £. 235,000

To which add 1 per cent. as a fund for paying it off according to the established system, and for charges

of management - - - - 78,500

£. 313,500

The first tax, then, I shall propose towards the payment of this annual sum, is

A Duty of 5 per Cent. on the higher priced Teas ;

I mean on all above the price of 2s. 6d. per lb. I am induced to propose this small additional duty, from seeing, by the late sales of the East-India Company, that the consumption of the higher priced teas has considerably increased even during the war ; and I cannot help thinking that it is as fair an article for a small tax as any that

could be found, as it is not intended to lay any addition whatever upon the lower sorts, which are bought by the middling and lower classes of society. I estimate this tax at - - - £. 130,000

The next article of taxation which I mean to propose is,

On British and Foreign Spirits.

The proposed amount of the duty on the Home-made Spirits is 1d. on the gallon of wash, or 5d. on the gallon of spirit; and the same proportionate duty to be laid on all kinds of Foreign Spirits. I need not inform gentlemen, that it is at this time a matter of discussion, whether, under the circumstances of the scarcity of grain, the distillery ought to be permitted to go on for the short remainder of the season which they can now work. It is a disputed point with those who have most attentively examined the subject, whether the advantages to be gained would not be counterbalanced by the detriment which would be suffered by the Public, in the loss of the food which would be incurred by such stoppage, since a number of cattle and hogs are fed for the markets by the distillery. Whether they shall be stopt, or not, for the season, however, gentlemen will not deny but that a permanent tax of this kind is not subject to any solid objection; since, if we are to have a home distillery, it is an article which ought to contribute to the public wants. And the same may be said of Rum and Brandy: the duties upon these liquors ought to be high. I estimate these duties to produce—

Home-made Spirits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100,000
Foreign Spirits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120,000

Making together - - 350,000

Which is more than the sum wanted.

The right honourable gentleman concluded by saying, that he needed not to add any thing to a statement so highly satisfactory; which proved to the Committee, and would prove to the Public, the growing prosperity of the kingdom; and, by shewing the resources which we had for the war, would be a means of enabling us to persevere in the struggle until we could obtain a peace of solid and permanent security. He then moved his first resolution on the taxes.

Mr. TIERNEY said, that to-night he observed with some suspicion that the right honourable gentleman had confined himself to a simple statement of financial details, without those embellishments of oratory which he used to employ. He was glad that the matter was thus left to its own merits; for he had frequently found by experience that nothing was more difficult to surmount than the impression of the right honourable gentleman's eloquence. With

respect to the exultation which was expressed by the right honourable gentleman on the review of our financial situation, he could not entirely agree with him. He thought that there was much in it that gave occasion for serious consideration. It certainly was a subject of serious consideration, that no less a sum than 41,500,000l. was to be raised for the service of the current year. Upon the detail of the supplies, however, he should not at present enter, as he hoped an opportunity would occur for doing that when he brought forward a second edition of the financial resolutions which he had offered last year. He could not help observing, at the same time, the very large sum that the House was called upon to vote without any previous estimate. This sum, consisting of army extraordinaries and foreign subsidies, without specification, amounted to no less than seven millions and a half. Many of the articles in the army extraordinaries were extremely vague. He observed particularly, that 3,000l. had been given to a Baron Hompesch, as an indemnification for quitting the Prussian service to raise a regiment in the service of this country, and the latter he understood to be a transaction sufficiently beneficial to have rendered any other bonus unnecessary. There was likewise the sum of 30,000l. to a Count de Muron, for services in the island of Ceylon; this sum too was exclusive of another sum of 50,000l. to the same person. He really thought that the House ought not thus to vote away large sums without having some explanation of the nature and merits of the services which they were called upon to reward. He thought that the House should exercise their controul in preventing any expenditure which was extravagant or unnecessary; for if it was so, they had no means of getting it back. With respect to the flourishing state of the revenue, he was extremely glad to find it was in so prosperous a state. It certainly had exceeded his most sanguine expectations; and the right honourable gentleman probably would have the candour to confess that it had exceeded his own also. It was a circumstance that must give the highest satisfaction to every one; and if we had good reason to believe that it would continue under a peace establishment, it would be subject of triumph. Into this point, however, he should not enter at present; but he begged leave to lay in his claim to perfect liberty to examine on a future occasion the grounds of the statement of the right honourable gentleman, notwithstanding the acknowledgement he had made of the general flourishing state of the public revenue. With respect to the monies which the right honourable gentleman had calculated upon to arise from payment of advances to the merchants of Grenada, &c. he thought that it was not very probable that they would

be available immediately. As to the income tax, he was of opinion that the statements of the right honourable gentleman on this subject gave room for serious reflection. It was said by Ministers, that one of the greatest advantages derived from the negotiation at Lisle was, that it enabled us to establish a solid system of finance. What was that system, however? In the outset of the measure the Minister had taken eight millions as the produce of the Assessed Tax Bill: but, exclusive of the voluntary contributions, an idea which was suggested in the progress of the business, no more than four millions and a half had been obtained. Afterwards, with the convoy duty, it was taken at seven millions. The whole amount of what was called the solid system of finance, in 1798, was no more than three millions. With respect to the income tax, which was considered as a farther improvement of the solid system, its amount had fallen greatly short of what was expected. The gentlemen of the city, when they met in a sort of Parliament of their own at the Mansion-house, seemed to have contented themselves with merely recommending the adoption of this system. When the produce of the Assessed-Tax Bill was under consideration, the country gentlemen were accused of all sorts of frauds to evade its operation. To their conduct the defalcation of produce was ascribed. The experience of the Income Tax, however, had shewn to whom the charge of evasion justly belonged. In opening that scheme, the right honourable gentleman had calculated, that from the commercial part of the community would be obtained no less than four millions of the whole amount. The gentlemen of the city, however, after having recommended the adoption of the measure, were resolved to take care that they should not be exposed to any disagreeable search. They were for leaving the investigation of their affairs to choice Commissioners; and such, from experience, it appeared they had been. Although many persons who had the greatest part of their property in land, chose, because they had some part in commerce, to go before the commercial Commissioners, yet not more than 1,100,000*l.* had been contributed by commerce. He even believed it would be found that the proportion of the Income Tax arising from commerce was not so much as he had stated. The rest of the produce of it, being upwards of four millions, was obtained from those classes, of whose evasions so much had formerly been complained. This circumstance, at a time when the country was in a state of unexampled prosperity, must be admitted to be very extraordinary. But the right honourable gentleman stated, that he intended to bring forward certain regulations for the better collection of the Income Tax. What these were to

be he had not hinted. Will the right honourable gentleman expose every species of property to the same mode of collection, and to the same publicity? In fact, one of the objections which he (Mr. Tierney) had formerly urged against the Income Tax was, that from its nature it could not be put in execution without great inequality and vexation. He thought, that without a mode of collection liable to great objections, the produce of the tax would fall greatly short of what had been expected. He had not been sanguine in his hopes of much being obtained from city morality. The truth of the matter he believed was, that the Minister did not estimate the advantages of the new system of finance merely by its produce. He had found, that his solid system of finance had this convenience, that it relieved him from the trouble of laying taxes which the people would feel. The Income Tax was a shelf to lay every thing upon. This was to produce all that was necessary, and the right honourable gentleman was to hold himself out as a Chancellor of the Exchequer who imposed no taxes. With respect to those which were proposed, he was of opinion, that the additional duty upon teas could be considered as no other than a temporary measure. After a peace it would be necessary to have recourse to some other means of raising the interest which would be required. If the duty was to remain as high as it now was, smuggling would again take place, in the same manner as before the commutation act. When the burdens immediately to be imposed appeared so trifling, was it considered that the Income Tax must continue at least for three years, and its after-duration must depend upon that of the war? With respect to its being rendered more productive, he could not understand on what ground the Minister's expectation was founded, if this year was, as he had stated, one of unexampled prosperity. In considering the probable amount of the Income Tax, it was to be recollected, that the people would no longer consider, as formerly, the war as just and necessary, when Ministers had refused even to hear what the enemy had to say. Their zeal, in itself, liable to wear off, would be much abated by such communications as had of late been laid before the House. In this state of things he could not see much reason to conclude that the produce of the tax would be much increased in future. The right honourable gentleman had not to-night, as formerly, told the House how the view of our financial resources would frighten the enemy. We are told that the Income Tax has produced between five and six millions; but he could not see how that statement could be very alarming to the Chief Consul. In the ways and means, which the Minister had brought forward, it was evident that he was postponing

those provisions which would be afterwards required; that he was evading, instead of meeting, our difficulties. He even had recourse to Post-obits as part of his Ways and Means:—he had solicited the Bank to purchase the renewal of their charter while it had twelve years to run! Surely, such resources as this proceeding indicated would not tend greatly to frighten the enemy. It would not intimidate the enemy to see that there was no less than thirteen millions and a half of the present loan for which no permanent provision was made. As to the loan, he agreed that the terms were extremely favourable to the public:—he could not admit, however, that this circumstance was a decisive proof of the prosperity of the country; he thought that it was no less a proof of the extravagant spirit of speculation which prevailed. From the way in which the subject was viewed, indeed, it seemed as if the war was considered as the greatest blessing. When men of plain understandings, however, saw that things were represented in a light so different from the natural course of events, they would conclude that something was wrong. They never would believe that a state of war was a state of the greatest prosperity. The bargain certainly was a good one for the country; and he wished it might turn out so for the contractors, though, to be advantageous to them, many favourable events must concur on which it was not prudent to calculate. Mr. Tierney, after expressing his satisfaction at the flourishing state of the revenue, proceeded to make some observations on the statements of Mr. Rose's pamphlet respecting our peace establishment, and repeated his intention to go more in detail into that subject on a future occasion.

Mr. Chancellor PITT, in reply, said, that the honourable gentleman seemed to have come down prepared to answer a point which he expected would have been insisted upon by him, but which he had entirely omitted. The answer, however, gentlemen had been favoured with, and this answer had supplied the omission of which he (Mr. Pitt) had been guilty. The honourable gentleman observed, that the budget had been closed every year by expatiating on the superiority of the terms on which the loan was contracted for, and by long details of the alarm which the knowledge of this mark of the increasing prosperity and resources of the country would give to the enemy. Surely there never was a period in which such language could have been used with greater propriety. It cannot but be alarming to the enemy to perceive that our current supplies are more easily procured, that our permanent taxes are more easily raised, at the end of seven years war, than they were at the commencement. This cannot but be alarming to the enemy in the

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same degree that it is consoling to this country, more especially as they are an enemy who have nursed and cherished the hope, and who have avowed it as their object, their view, and as the means by which they expect finally to triumph over our efforts, to make bankrupt this country in its trade, in its commerce, and in its finances. Such language might therefore have been used on the present occasion, without incurring any imputation of vanity, or estimating too low the resources of the enemy. The honourable gentleman has also found out, that borrowing on good terms is disadvantageous to the country, and it is by no means desirable, because it proceeds from and encourages a spirit of speculation. This must surely be a new method of calculating advantages, which goes to prove, that because there are monied gentlemen in the kingdom, who, influenced by a conviction of the prosperity of the country, of the abundance of its resources, and of the stability of the principles upon which its conduct to its creditors has ever been founded, are willing to come forward and to lend their money to the public, on advantageous terms for the public, therefore the making of such a loan is not to be desired. Were he to make any inference from such a circumstance as this taking place, he should say, that it proved that the country was prosperous, that its resources were great, and that its power and its means were sufficient even to alarm the Great Consul. The honourable gentleman argued, that the new system of finance which had been adopted, had not shewn itself to be, what it was boasted to be—a permanent system of solid finance, because the Assessed and Income Taxes had not amounted to the sum at which they were originally estimated; and said, that he could not see upon what grounds the produce of the Income Tax this year should be estimated at 7,000,000*l.* when it had only produced 6,000,000*l.* But he had already stated what he conceived to be a just ground of expectation of an increase of the produce of the Income Tax, and also an excuse for the deficiency of that produce from his original calculation. This was, that it was a new tax; that from the ignorance of collectors an opportunity had been given to many to defraud the Government; but that some new regulations, and greater experience, would tend to prevent such frauds, and to increase the produce of the tax. And because the produce of this tax was once estimated at 10,000,000*l.* is it proved that the whole permanent system of solid finance has failed? Does the honourable gentleman forget, that from this system it results that near 3,000,000*l.* are appropriated to the supplies of the year, arising from the surplus of the consolidated fund, which may most accurately be called from money raised within the year? The whole

of the system is not yet realized ; but it is nearly so. If before, the terms on which loans were contracted for were more hard for the public—if before, it was difficult to find taxes, or to raise the money from them necessary for paying the interest of those loans, and if now we are told that we borrow upon too favourable terms ; if the new taxes proposed in opening a budget are so few and so small, that gentlemen are desired to be suspicious lest the burden is only put off for a time ; then it is but fair to conclude, that the system is established, that its effects are powerful, and that it promises to become permanent and solid. Upon this point also he found himself supported by the honourable gentleman himself, who stated, in language which he would not have used, sentiments with which he could not coincide, but sentiments which entitled him, if they were true, to estimate the produce of the Income Tax higher than the produce of last year. “ He expressly said, that the tax had not at all been paid by the commercial part of the country, or, at least, that from this great division of the income of the country, not more than 500,000*l.* had been paid. But if only such a sum has been raised from the commercial part of the community, this cannot be its fair proportion of the tax ; nor can it be objected against me for stating, that by some regulations which should secure Government from being defrauded, the average of the produce of the tax would be greater. I will not now discuss or detail these new regulations ; but a good deal may be expected from the collectors being better acquainted with the method of collecting the tax. The honourable gentleman then proceeded to say, that by proving the country to be in such a state of prosperity, we prove too much ; we prove that the war is a blessing, and that peace is not to be desired. Certainly war is not in itself a blessing ; but war carried on with increasing resources, with multiplying means, with increased prosperity to the country, is a blessing compared with a peace without security, without confidence, with a peace made with France so long as the present system of its Government is pursued. But war is not a blessing when compared with a peace which will secure, retain, and confirm the advantages and prosperity we now enjoy. The honourable gentleman next adverted to and complained of the renewal of the Bank Charter, and of obtaining three millions by what he called a *Post-Obit*. But if he will look to the statute-book, he will find, that this is no unprecedented proceeding, as he has called it ; that it is a proceeding which has been adopted every time the Bank Charter required renewal, and sometimes even a longer time before its expiration than at present is the case.” He did not at present mean to enter upon any defence of this transaction, because it

would again come under review with greater propriety ; but the terms of the contract he would pledge himself to prove advantageous to the country. " The honourable gentleman has made another most strange discovery, which it is sufficient to state, in order to its exposure—he has discovered that Ministry, by the tax upon Income, are postponing the difficulties of raising the supplies, and are endeavouring to prevent the people from feeling the burthens of the war, by making them pay the capital at present, instead of the interest. This would be a strange method, indeed, of preventing the people from feeling the burthens of the war." Another remark made by the honourable gentleman was, that the accustomed estimates had not been produced ; and he thought he confirmed this remark by stating, that seven millions and a half was proposed to be voted, on which proper estimates were not produced ; but he allowed, out of this seven millions, two millions and a half (or, as he ought to have stated it, three millions—because it comprehended the 500,000*l.* appropriated to the provision for the Russian troops in this kingdom, as well as the proposed subsidies to the German powers) were devoted to the payment of foreign subsidies, and that the other two millions and a half were devoted to the army extraordinaries. Two millions and a half more were for the current extraordinaries : of these no estimates could properly be given in ; and the practice, which had only been departed from by him (Mr. Pitt), was to leave them to be incurred as debts, without the consent of Parliament, he thought worse than that which he had adopted, of proposing these sums to be voted by Parliament before hand, though estimates could not be given in upon them, because it was impossible to specify the exact purposes to which they might be appropriated. Gentlemen would judge from such short and simple statements, how far the account which he had given in was such as they could approve of, and sanction by their votes.

Mr. BURDON entered into a justification of the conduct of the Commercial Commissioners, and insisted that they had behaved with the greatest prudence and integrity. He was astonished that the honourable gentleman (Mr. Tierney) should attempt to repress the joyful sensations which every one must have felt from the statements of his right honourable friend. Never had the nation greater cause for joy or a greater call for gratitude to the Minister who conducted its concerns.

Mr. TIERNEY replied to the arguments of Mr. Pitt, in justification of his former statements.

Mr. JOLLIFFE said, that we were told when the Income Tax was imposed, that it would only last with the war ; but we were

now employing it to pay the interest of a debt which we were contracting, and he feared much that it would be next to perpetual.

The several resolutions were then put and agreed to. The House was resumed, and the Report ordered to be brought up to-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, February 25.

Mr. BRAGGE brought up the bill for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and several others, from the Commons.

The bill for continuing the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act till the first of February 1801, was read a first time, and upon the motion that it be now read a second time,

Lord HOLLAND rose, and said, that it was not his intention then to oppose the principle of the bill, though he highly disapproved of it. He merely rose to exclaim against the indecency of hurrying a bill of such importance so rapidly through the House. It was proposed to read twice on the same night a bill for suspending the most valuable privilege we possessed, and for this proceeding no reason whatever was assigned. This was indecent, disrespectful to the House, and unparliamentary. He felt the more disposed to take notice of this violation of a standing order, because it had been more frequently practised during the present Parliament than during any preceding one. In former times, upon unforeseen emergencies and urgent occasions, bills had been carried through several stages on the same night; but of late years this had been repeatedly done by Ministers without the smallest pretext. This practice was highly dangerous and unconstitutional. It was proper that a repeated opportunity should be given for debating the merits of every bill, and not that it should be stolen clandestinely through the House.

The LORD CHANCELLOR left the woolfack, and said that he should shortly reply to the speech of the noble Lord. There certainly was a standing order, that no bill should pass through more than a single stage on one day; but upon pressing occasions this order has been frequently dispensed with. It had often happened, that a new act had been read thrice and passed in one night; but this was only an act to continue an act already passed, whose nature and provisions were well known. There were only two things to be considered in discussing this measure, viz, Whether the Habeas Corpus Act should be further suspended; and for how long it should be sus-

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pended? Both of these points might be considered and settled on Thursday, when the bill would be read a third time. There was thus certainly no indecency in the present motion; but the necessity of it had been produced by an inadvertency, of which he himself had been guilty. He did not recollect, till he had taken his seat on the woollack, that to-morrow was a day on which the House would not do business. He had supposed that the bill might have been then read a second time, and gone regularly through each of its stages. Upon that supposition he had agreed to their Lordships adjourning from Thursday to Tuesday; but had he been aware that the 26th was Ash-Wednesday, he would have proposed that they should have met on Monday, in which case no irregularity would have been committed. But since he had been guilty of that oversight, it was necessary that the bill should be read twice that night or twice on Thursday, as the term of the last act for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act expired on Friday.

Lord HOLLAND said, that he must still affirm that it was extraordinary, indecent, and unparliamentary, for a bill to be carried through two stages on one day. This was an impropriety which within these few years had become extremely common, and which certainly should be put a stop to. However, after the candid confession which had been made by the noble Lord on the woollack, he would not insist upon the general law being enforced, in this particular instance, which without that explanation he most assuredly would have done. He reprobated the bill; it unnecessarily deprived us of our liberties, and he felt it his duty to oppose it. But he thought it would be improper to enter into the discussion of the merits of such an important measure when the House was so thin, he would therefore defer the observations he had to make against the bill till it should be read a third time on Thursday, on which day he begged that the Lords might be summoned to attend.

The bill was then read a second time, and ordered to be read a third time on Thursday.

Lord KING said, that before their Lordships could judge of the propriety of vesting such powers again in the hands of His Majesty's Ministers, it would be necessary to know how they had formerly been exercised. He would therefore move, that there be laid before the House a list of all persons confined by virtue of the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, with the places of their confinement, and the dates of their commitments.—Ordered.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, February 25.

On the motion of Mr. LONG, a writ was issued for the election of a Citizen to serve in Parliament, in the room of Sir Harry Vane Tempest, who had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds.

The Marine Mutiny Bill was read a third time, and passed.

The Scotch Distillery Bill was read a second time, committed, the Report of the Committee received, and the bill ordered to be read a third time to-morrow. In the Committee, the blank for the period of its duration was filled up with the words, the first day of February 1801.

Lord HAWKESBURY expressed a wish that the further consideration of the Report of the Committee that was now investigating the causes and the remedy of the present scarcity of corn, &c. might be deferred till this day se'nnight. Within that time he hoped gentlemen would be able to prepare all the propositions which they meant to advance. This was a topic which had already greatly agitated the public mind, and it was much to be wished that it should be discussed as little and as seldom as possible. The Committee expected to be able to bring in their final Report on the day to which he desired to postpone the consideration of that important subject.

The motion was then put for deferring the further consideration of the Report till this day se'nnight, and agreed to.

Sir JOHN SINCLAIR said, that he would not for the present attempt to press the motion for a general Enclosure Bill, of which he had given notice. His intention now was, to take the first opportunity of proposing certain regulations on that head, but he did not intend to make them like a general enclosure of all waste, &c. lands.

Mr. JONES moved that there be laid before the House an account of the number of French Emigrants now within this kingdom, distinguishing the laity from the clergy.—Ordered.

Mr. BRAGGE brought up the Report of the Committee of Ways and Means. The different resolutions, among which were the resolution for an additional tax of 10d. on every gallon of Brandy, and of double that sum, or 1s. 8d. on ditto above proof; also for an additional tax of 8d. on every gallon of Rum, and double that sum on Rum above proof; were agreed to, and bills ordered to be brought in pursuant to the same.

Mr. Chancellor PITT then moved, that the House do resolve itself into a Committee on the Report of the Resolutions for granting a renewal of the Charter of the Bank of England—upon which

Mr. HOBHOUSE said, that he had just received a letter from an honourable friend of his (Mr. Tierney), who wished to deliver his opinion upon this subject, but who was precluded from attending in his place this day by unforeseen and indispensable business. His honourable friend would, however, not fail to attend on the second reading, or any other regular stage of the business.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that there was no regular stage of this business; but that he was willing to discuss it whenever it was convenient to the honourable gentleman alluded to.

Mr. Chancellor Pitt then moved, that the resolution respecting the renewal of the Bank Charter, and the proposition annexed to it, be referred to the Committee of Ways and Means.—Agreed to.

Wednesday, February 26. (Ash-Wednesday.)

No business done in either House.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, February 27.

The Duke of PORTLAND laid before the House, a list of the persons confined on treasonable charges, or suspicion thereof, under the bill for Suspending the Habeas Corpus Act.

Lord CLIFTON (Earl of Darnley) then rose, and said:—
“My Lords, in offering myself again to your attention on the very important subject of the alarm occasioned by the Report of the House of Commons on the last crop of wheat, and the speeches of noble Lords in this House which have been founded on that Report, I am principally impelled, by a sense of public duty, paramount to every other consideration, and which leads me to attempt, if possible, to do away the mischievous and dangerous impression which they have necessarily produced on the public mind; but I am also influenced, in some degree, by a far less important consideration, inasmuch as it is one of a private and personal nature, which makes me very anxious to prove, to the satisfaction of this House and of the Public, that the opinions advanced by me when this subject was before brought forward under your consideration,

were neither light nor groundless, but rested upon much better and more substantial foundation than any opinion or assertion of mine. Would to God, my Lords, that this subject had never been matter of public discussion at all, in either House of Parliament! for it cannot be too often repeated, that on such a subject the interference of Parliament can do but little good, and is sure to produce mischief. Since, however, it is become matter of public discussion, and in consequence an alarm has been raised, in my opinion, equally mischievous and unfounded, it is with much satisfaction, on every account, that I am now enabled to lay before the House such authentic documents, and such respectable authorities in confirmation of my opinion, as must, I am sure, be heard by all your Lordships with that attention which is due to them, and tend very materially to convince this House and the Public that we are by no means in such a situation as has been represented by exaggerated statements in both Houses of Parliament on the subject of the last crop of wheat, and the probable supply now in the country. I therefore must beg leave to premise, that although one noble Lord may, by shewing that his learning extends beyond the subject before the House, and quoting a story from the *Spectator* or any other book as little to the purpose as he pleases, or another noble Lord, or learned Prelate, by roundly asserting, that I have been confuted, because no arguments have been advanced against me, take for granted that he has sufficiently established his statement in opposition to mine, I trust that neither this House nor the Public will think so, unless they have more authentic documents and more substantial proof of the opposite opinion that I am now enabled to offer in support of mine.

"I shall begin with the part of England, with which I am most acquainted, and which has been treated by a noble Lord near me (Lord Auckland) with so much contempt, I mean the county of Kent; for which, whatever my partiality may be, I am ready to admit, that, with respect to mere extent, it is trifling when compared with the rest of the kingdom; but as far as it goes, as a county producing wheat for the supply of the metropolis, is by no means inconsiderable; and thus much I will venture to assert, without fear of contradiction, even from Mr. Arthur Young himself, that no county in the kingdom produces so much wheat per acre in proportion to the natural quality of the soil.

"I have a letter in my hand from a most respectable authority in that county, a gentleman who farms a considerable estate of his own, who has extensive means of information, and who, I know, is incapable of writing or saying any thing that he does not believe to be the fact, although, as he is a considerable grower of wheat

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himself, it would be his interest to prove, if possible, the deficiency of the crop greater than it is. He writes:—

“Your Lordship knows, that in one part of this neighbourhood wheat is a good crop; most of the Hundred * is almost, if not quite, as productive as usual: but this is certainly very far from being the case in general: one circumstance must also be recollected, that wheat weighs less than usual by eight or ten pounds a sack, of course will produce much less flour; this being taken into the amount, I should imagine the crop (the quantity of flour) would be one-fourth less than usual.

“The quantity sown at this time of the year is supposed to be usually one-third of the whole. I apprehend the proportion now remaining is not more than a fourth.

“Mr. Edmeades (a most respectable and opulent gentleman farmer) tells me, that he met a very intelligent hoyman at Mark Lane on Friday from East Kent, from whose information he supposed the failure of the last year's crop was about one-fourth in that part of the country, and that a large proportion was remaining unthreshed.

“*Camen, February 24, 1800.*”

* The peninsula formed by the Thames and Medway.

This letter agrees perfectly with what I before asserted on the subject of the county of Kent. With regard to Essex, another great source of supply to the London market, I have not the same means of information; but a great farmer in that county being asked the other day, in my presence, whether he thought the last year's crop in Essex justified Members of Parliament in stating that wheat was not more than half an average crop, replied, he feared it was too true. But would you take three quarters an acre for your over crop? “No (was the reply); I myself have been very fortunate, and suppose I shall average four quarters and an half an acre.”

“With respect to another considerable corn county (Suffex), I was this day informed by a most respectable Member of the other House, who has a considerable property in that county, that he believed the crop there fell very little short of an average. Another Member of Parliament, who himself occupies a large farm in Hertfordshire, and whose knowledge on the subject is undoubted, gives the same account of his neighbourhood, where so much corn is produced. I will now read a letter which is addressed to a friend of mine from Newmarket, and is written by a competent judge on the subject:

“DEAR SIR,

Newmarket, February 26, 1800.

“I was this moment favoured with yours, and am very sorry I did not receive it yesterday, which was our market day, when I could have gained every information I could have wished on the subject; but you

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may rest assured I am perfectly of the same opinion I gave you when I saw you, which is, that a very considerable number of opulent farmers have barely began to thresh out their wheat crop, and I am certain that many of them have a great deal of old wheat by them. I am far from being alone in the above opinion; it is anticipated by numbers who have as good an opportunity of knowing as myself, and some much better: however, if I can gain any authentic intelligence, I will send you a line immediately."

By this letter it evidently appears, that in that neighbourhood there is no great deficiency of wheat.

"I shall now produce to your Lordships an authority which is probably known to some of you. These letters are from Mr. Webb, a gentleman most respectable in his profession as a surveyor and valuer of estates, who is agent to some Members of this House, and much employed by them and others in different parts of England, but chiefly in the western counties, with which he is intimately acquainted. I know him myself personally, and firmly believe him to be a competent judge of the subject, on which he writes as follows:

"MY LORD,

Salisbury, February 21, 1800.

"Am sorry it has been out of my power sooner to thank you for the honour of writing to me as to the state of the last wheat crop. My observations led me to form the following opinion of it; and if you wish it by a line to-morrow, I will draw it up as an affidavit, and send you my affidavit to that effect by Sunday's post; but you will observe it is a matter of opinion, as I have not tried the matter of fact: That from my journeys through parts of the counties of Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wilts, Hants, Berks, Oxford, and Gloucester, in the Summer of 1799, and from surveying several estates within some of those counties, it appeared to me that the crops of wheat had failed very much in light exposed situations towards a North aspect, and in wet and cold lands; but in good, dry, healthy soils, it had a fine appearance in many places which I observed a little before, and in the time of harvest: That from my observations I firmly believe, and am of opinion, that the crops were upon two tenths, about one fourth of an average crop; upon three tenths, about two thirds; and on five tenths, about four fifths; making together about two thirds of an average crop. In my rides before harvest, I observed several wheat ricks standing out, and lately have seen many; but I am of opinion the present stock of wheat is less by about one fourth, or one third, than is usual at this season.

"I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect,

"My Lord, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) "FRANCIS WEBB."

"MY LORD,

Newport, February 25, 1800.

"In my way here yesterday I counted forty wheat ricks as I came from Devizes Green to Tetbury, eighteen from thence to within six miles of Gloucester, the Rodborough road, when it became dark, between Gloucester and Chepstow seven, and from Chepstow to this place ten—in

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all seventy-five, within a quarter of a mile from the road—I observed but very few rick staddles empty; so that but little of the last year's wheat set up in ricks has yet been threshed out in the above space; and I think there seems to be as many wheat ricks to be seen on the road from Devizes to Gloucester (which I have for five or six years often travelled) as were usually seen on that road at this season of the year. One or two were old ricks. I wrote in haste to save the post on Friday; and on more deliberate consideration, I think I over-rated the proportionate quantity of land that failed in its crop, and omitted a proportion which had a good average crop; so that on the whole I have no doubt but the wheat crop of last year was *full three fourths of an average crop*. The failing prospect began to be talked of at least by this time last year, and has ever since, among the farmers, too frequently been mentioned, and, I am sorry to say, not always with fair representation; and those accounts having been the subject of gentlemen's conversations, I have no doubt but the general opinion of the failure is formed upon exaggerated representations, for want of candour in those interested in propagating such reports, and for want of being duly contradicted or counteracted by statements of the good crops that happened. Much has been said, that one side of the ears were injured by the frost; but I think that has been misrepresented also: I have examined several ears, and only found two or three defective grains in any ear, near the point or top of it.

“I am, with the greatest respect,

“My Lord, &c. &c. &c.

(Signed) “FRANCIS WEBB.”

“Nothing can be stronger or more satisfactory than the testimony of Mr. Webb with respect to the supply of wheat in that very extensive district with which he is acquainted.

“I come now to an authority, which those who are well acquainted with agriculture must know and respect; I mean Mr. Davis, who is steward to a noble Marquis, a Member of this House. Mr. Davis is practically and intimately acquainted with the whole of this subject, and of his knowledge and abilities the papers which I am about to read will be the best possible proof:

“MY LORD,

Horningham, February 20, 1800.

“As the stock of wheat in hand is a subject on which I think the alarm has been much greater than is really necessary, and will, I fear, increase instead of remedying the evil, I shall be happy to give your Lordship every information that may enable you to oppose it. But as so many authorities have been quoted in support of the idea that the scarcity is greater than was ever known, I think the contradiction (if it can be contradicted) should rest on some better authority than my bare assertion. I shall therefore write letters immediately to men of the best information in every part of the kingdom, and send your Lordship the result of their answers. I am very sensible that the stock in hand is small, and the

quality bad; but I trust neither so small, or so bad, as has been represented.

“ I am, &c. &c.

(Signed) “ THOMAS DAVIS.

“ I agree entirely with your Lordship, that there can be no reason why wheat should not be 10l. a quarter, or still higher; at present nothing keeps it where it is but the poverty and, in some instances, the public spirit of farmers. But let the millers and jobbers get hold of it, and who can controul their prices? I am decidedly of opinion, that the sooner the subject is laid asleep in the House, the sooner the price will fall.”

“ MY LORD,

Sunday Morning, Feb. 23, 1800.

“ After writing a number of circular letters to my acquaintance in different parts of the kingdom, who are competent to give information respecting the stock of wheat in hand, I did not intend to write to your Lordship till I could give you the result of my inquiries; but meeting yesterday with the examination of Mr. Arthur Young (which, if it had been intended to have set the whole kingdom in a mutiny, could not have been better worded), I sat down to answer it; and last evening, when I had just finished a rough draft of my thoughts on the subject, I saw by the newspapers that the subject had been debated in the House of Lords, and the resolutions carried, notwithstanding the very proper and just opposition made by your Lordship to them. Supposing, therefore, that your Lordship might wish to bring on the matter again, and that the sooner you were furnished with hints the better, I determined to send away my rough sketch by this post, which I hope your Lordship will be able to make out, and that it agrees with the information you have received elsewhere.

“ Your Lordship is not only perfectly welcome to use my name, but I shall think it an honour to have it used on so laudable an occasion; and if there should be a necessity, and if I find the result of my inquiries will bear me out, I shall have no objection to be at the bar of the House, and give evidence on the subject.

(Signed) “ THOMAS DAVIS.”

Answers to Assertions made to the Committee of the House of Commons respecting the Scarcity of Wheat, February 1800.

As to the stock of wheat in hand at the end of last harvest:—

That the stock in hand was not probably one month's consumption.

Answer—“ This can be, at least, but a random guess; but it is easy to demonstrate that it is impossible to be true.

“ It is a fact but little attended to, that the time of threshing wheat is necessarily confined to a few months in the year, viz. from the end of harvest till barley and oat straw are wanted for fodder, and from the time the cattle leave the straw yards until the men are wanted for hay-making; so that in common years there is very little wheat threshed in the months of November, December, January, February, and March.—It is not meant to be stated that no wheat is threshed in those months, but that the threshers *must necessarily* be employed in that period on oats and barley for the sake of the fodder, and particularly on barley for malting, which is only wanted, at least to any extent, in those months.

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It is now nearly the end of February; the harvest was not over, so as to leave labourers at leisure for barn work till the beginning of October, and in some counties much later; for the first month, or nearer six weeks, the greater part of the wheat threshed was wanted for seed. This brought us into the month of November, and by the middle of that month it was necessary to begin threshing oats and barley for fodder, and which, as hay was both scarce and dear, was more than usual in request this year; of course but a small portion of the last wheat crop has been, or could be threshed. What was threshed was chiefly old wheat, except that for seed, because the new wheat being harvested in so wet a state was not fit to grind for flour, and nobody would buy it for that purpose. What have we then lived upon from harvest to this time? I answer, that we have lived *great part* of the time upon old wheat;—for two reasons, first, because great part of the wheat must have been threshed, and probably ground before the end of harvest, besides what has been threshed since, being comparatively small in consequence of the short time in which the threshers could be employed to thresh for food; and, secondly, because great part of the new wheat was too damp to thresh, or to grind if threshed. If I am told that much wheat was secured without rain, I answer, that such wheat crops were not much affected by the wet harvest: and if I am told that threshing mills have contributed to bring more wheat to market than usual, I answer, that not one farmer in ten thousand has got such a machine; and if they had, the dampness of the grain would have prevented their use.

“I know many corn-dealers who bought up very large quantities in August, when the deficiency of the crop began to be suspected; this deficiency being owing, in a very great measure, to a hard frost the 17th of July, when the wheat was in blossom.”

Second Assertion—by some, that the last crop was not more than two-thirds of an average crop—by others, not above one-half of an average crop.

Answer—“I take the above to be a mistake, owing to misapplication of the term “Average Crop,” especially when I see it asserted, that an average crop is twenty-three Winchester bushels. Now taking all the great corn counties together, twenty bushels is a fair average crop. If, therefore, the last crop was two-thirds of twenty-three, viz. $15\frac{1}{3}$ bushels, as I am assured from the best information it was, it follows, that it was three-fourths of an average crop, and of course equal to nine months consumption; and if we had only three months consumption in hand at the end of last harvest, (and I positively assert we had much more,) the whole twelve months consumption will be provided for, without mentioning that the lateness of the last harvest has left us probably a month less to provide for than usual. It is idle to say that a full crop is barely sufficient, with the quantity usually imported, for the consumption of the kingdom. Every farmer knows, that in plentiful years of wheat a considerable part of it is not applied directly to the food of man, but is used for pigs and poultry, and by the distillers; besides what is used for starch, hair-powder, &c.; and in such years the poor live almost entirely upon wheaten bread; whereas, as soon as an advance in price takes place, three-fourths of their food is potatoes. The consumption of wheat is more regulated by the price (provided any other substitute can be got)

than it could be by the most rigid laws; those substitutes are potatoes and barley; for although oats make the food of a considerable part of the kingdom, they are seldom or ever resorted to in those places where wheaten bread is usually eaten. Those who have been used to wheaten bread, neither like oats, or know how to use them; their resort is to barley, which, in the West of England, is allowed by the labouring poor to be equally nutritious with wheat, though not quite so palatable.—At this time the price of barley flour is exactly half the price of *one way* wheat flour; for although barley for malting is worth sixty shillings a quarter, there is fortunately so much that having been injured by the wet is unfit for malt, that tolerable barley fit for meal is bought for little more than half the price; and were the distilleries stopt, the price would still be lower—But it is to be remarked here, that as so great a part of the food of the poor is potatoes, a deficiency in that article would, in the West of England, and probably still more in the North, be more severely felt than a deficiency of wheat. Query, therefore, whether a resolution in the rich to abandon bread and eat potatoes as a substitute, would not raise the price of potatoes, and increase the distress of the poor instead of alleviating it?"

Affertions respecting the necessity of Economy in the use of Wheat, and the most likely means of doing it.

"It has been said, that more flour may be obtained from wheat than is usually done, and that the bran, so far from deteriorating the quality of the bread, makes it more wholesome, pleasant, and nutritious. It has even been said, that the whole nourishment lies in the bran, and experiments and authorities have been quoted in support of this opinion."

Answer—"As to the necessity of economy in the use of wheat, no man in his senses will deny it; because, even if the stock in hand were allowed to be sufficient to last till the next harvest, no man can tell what the produce of that harvest may be, but the use of bran as food will be a poor substitute for wheat flour. Coarse bread not only will be less acceptable to the poor, but they know it is less nutritious. By those who have the choice of the richest animal food, brown bread may be eaten as a luxury; but those who are forced to eat bread alone, are in the right to eat white bread; they know it is more wholesome and more nourishing, or their good sense (for they are not so devoid of sense as some of their superiors think) would lead them to buy a kind, of which they would have more for their money: even that foolish animal, a pig, has long since found out that there is very little nourishment in bran, for he will get fat with coarse flour or fine pollard, and almost starve if confined to bran alone. But the saving by leaving the bran in the flour is much less than is usually imagined, because the coarser the flour is, the less water will it absorb in dough, and make the less bread in proportion to its original weight; and when made into bread, the finer it is, the farther it will go for the use of children, when given soaked in water, tea, or milk; to which purpose it is usually applied by the poor, while the father and mother live most on potatoes.

"But the great fear is, that the publication of opinions from high authority respecting the scarcity of wheat, will tend to bring about that

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famine they were intended to prevent; the idea that wheat will be still dearer than it is, operates as a sort of premium for farmers to withhold it, or for millers and dealers to buy it up: and what law can prevent it?

"If those who are interested should believe these opinions, may they not say, if wheat is to be so very scarce in June and July, we may then sell it for double the price it is now; it will therefore pay good interest for keeping. Is not that what all dealers in other commodities would do? and why not corn-dealers?"

"As a proof of this, while I am now writing (Saturday evening, 22d February), a considerable baker, just returned from Warminster market, where corn is sold in bulk, and not by sample, tells me, that although the quantity of wheat in the market was uncommonly large, a great number of the farmers set it in to wait for another market day rather than abate the price. The only mode that occurs to me to answer the purpose of saving wheat, in the West of England, (where the use of oats as food for man is not generally known,) is to stop the distilleries at once, which will bring all the barley which is unfit for malting within the reach of the poor; it would be a popular step, and would certainly answer the end in this country, particularly in the villages.

"To discourage the use of wheat bread in the great towns by the general introduction of cheap soup shops, and by recommending to parish officers, &c. to give relief in bread as little as possible.

"The dearthness of wheat will reduce the use of it in the country much more than the most rigid laws; and the regulation of ordering only stale bread to be sold will certainly reduce the consumption of it in town. Any regulation to oblige the poor to abstain from wheat bread, or even to use a coarser sort than they have been accustomed to, will, in my humble opinion, do mischief. Even the alarm has already done mischief; and, if carried much farther, the consequences may be dreadful.

"If there was twice as much corn in the kingdom as there is, an idea that the price would rise would keep it from the market, particularly from the port of London; and although some farmers might be obliged to sell through poverty, there would always be a miller or corn-dealer to purchase of them, and to keep it back from the market: And what law is there, or can there be made, to oblige the holders of corn to bring it to market, or to fix the maximum of the price when there? Such a law would be absurd, impolitic, and unjust in the extreme; and yet, unless such a law is made, or the present inquiry abandoned, or carried on more privately, we shall in a few weeks be in as complete a state of famine as if even there was not a bushel of wheat in the island. The last inquiry in July 1795 was injurious: What must this be, when harvest is four months more distant than at that time?

"N. B. It is taken for granted, that every possible exertion will be made to get an importation, if any wheat is to be got; and a reduction in the price of rice, if practicable, would be a great saving to the second poor, who use much of it in puddings.

"The project of giving premiums for early potatoes is idle in the extreme; they never can be raised early at a price the poor can buy them, and the crop will be but about half what it would be in proper season."

"Your Lordships will perceive, by these letters and statements of Mr. Davis, that he agrees on many material points, in the opinion which I stated to the House on a former occasion, and, indeed, in many places he almost uses the same words. You will perceive also, that if it were possible to doubt the authenticity of his communications, he is ready, whenever called upon, to substantiate them upon oath at your bar. How far your Lordships may deem it wise or expedient to call upon him to do so, together with many others worthy of credit, who, I know, are ready to come forward, I know not. At present, whatever my own opinion may be, I shall forbear to trouble you with any motion on the subject, but leave it entirely to your wisdom and discretion. A noble Lord, in a former debate, laid much stress on the situation of the West Riding of York, where he asserted the poor were almost starving. I have since seen a very respectable and well-informed man from that country, who informs me, it is very true that the labouring poor are in much distress on account of the very high price of corn; but it is the unanimous opinion of all who are well informed on the subject, that the price is much higher than the real deficiency of the supply warrants; and this I take to be pretty much the case in all parts of the kingdom.

"In addition to those most respectable authorities from different parts of England, I have also a letter from a particular friend of mine, who resides in a part of North Wales where much corn is grown, and who states, that there, also, the deficiency is by no means so great as has been represented.

"And now, having, as I trust on the most uncontrovertible evidence, derived from truly respectable sources, from persons who are in every point competent judges of the subject on which they write, and who have besides as little interest as I am sure they have inclination to deceive me, proved that my former statement was neither made lightly, nor without foundation, I should feel I betrayed my duty to your Lordships and my Country if I did not clearly and strongly express my disapprobation of the exaggerated statements of distress and approaching famine, which have been conveyed to the Public by the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on your table, and by speeches in this House founded on that Report, which, though calculated, in my opinion, to do infinite mischief, rest upon no better foundation than the evidence (if it deserve that name) of Mr. Claude Scott and Mr. Arthur Young—I beg I may be understood as speaking of those gentlemen with all the respect which I really believe they deserve; but however respectable they may be, their bare opinion (for it was no

more, as you forward and especially former to his, a impending House, to conceal the argument these difficulties, do the frightful or even people of not sufficient same time obviating would have doubtedly a remedy that what as it must withhold have told trust I Public, the fact, but, year is not year so in there is a hand to difficult to lightly, a the hideous by foundation of England bread, they have none Virgil, wondrous by the dr

more, and not on oath) is a miserable foundation for such an alarm as you have created in the country. Some noble Lords appear forward to take credit to themselves for having founded this alarm, and especially one (Lord Auckland) who sits near me, who on a former occasion, when I ventured to give my opinion in opposition to his, appeared to assume much merit for those strong statements of impending famine, with which he first introduced this subject to the House, because, as he alleged, they were founded in truth. Now to concede that point for a moment, and to admit, for the sake of the argument, that these exaggerated statements of present scarcity, these dismal forebodings of future famine were really founded in fact, does that noble Lord really think, that, in holding up this frightful spectacle to public view, he acts with policy, with wisdom, or even with humanity? Instead of proclaiming to the affrighted people of this country, that the stock of corn at present on hand is not sufficient to support them till the next harvest, without at the same time being able to point out to them any effectual means of obviating the evil, (as was the case in the present instance,) surely it would have been more consistent with humanity, as well as it undoubtedly is with wisdom, to have remained silent, at least till such a remedy could be found. But instead of remedying, I contend, that what you have done must inevitably increase the evil, inasmuch as it must tempt all persons, who have corn in their possession, to withhold it from market, in hopes of a better price, which you have told them they have so much reason to expect. But if, as I trust I have proved to the satisfaction of the House and of the Public, the great alarm which has been raised is not founded on fact, but, on the contrary, the deficiencies of the crop of the last year is neither so great, nor the surplus of that of the preceding year so inconsiderable as has been stated, that, on the contrary, there is reasonable ground to believe that there is wheat enough in hand to supply the country till next harvest, I really find it difficult to express, in terms sufficiently strong, my opinion of those who lightly, and without sufficient proof, bring forward to public view the hideous spectre of famine, which they fancy is approaching, and by sounding their boasted trumpet of alarm, proclaim to the people of England, that much as they may now suffer by the high price of bread, they must soon expect to suffer much more, and probably have none to eat. They remind me of those magnificent lines of Virgil, wherein he describes the fury of Discord raising her tremendous voice, and terrifying all the surrounding nations of Italy by the dreadful sound :

" At sava è speculis tempus dea nacta nocendi,
Tartaream intendit vocem; quâ protinus omne
Contremuit nemus, et silvæ intonare profundæ.
Audiit et trivis longe lacus, audiit amnis
Sulfurea nar albus aqua, fontefque veline."

"The trumpet of approaching famine (sounded, as I contend, without reason) has been heard from the Orkneys to the Land's End. The inhabitants of the whole island have been terrified with it; and mothers who, at the present price of the necessaries of life, find it difficult to maintain their children, tremble at the approach of much greater distress, which you have taught them to expect. But those who have done this say it is with the best intentions, and with a view of remedying the evil. They think they have discharged their duty, by publicly making such statements; and for this I am ready to give them full credit. On the other hand, however, I think I have discharged mine, by endeavouring to confute them; and I leave your Lordships and the Public to judge between us."

The order of the day for the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act being read,

Lord KING said, that he should not consider himself as a friend to the Constitution of the country, if he could sit down contented with giving a silent vote to the present question. The Habeas Corpus he had always been taught to look upon as one of the strongest and most sacred barriers of the Constitution, and one of the most material safeguards of the liberties and privileges of the people. As such, he could never consent that it should be from time to time suspended, without even one single reason being offered why it should be so. It was the opinion of all the most celebrated political writers, that the Habeas Corpus Act ought never to be suspended, but upon occasions of the most urgent and imminent necessity: those occasions had been pointed out, and were, internal insurrection, or an apprehension of foreign invasion. In the year 1798, when the suspension was moved for, Ministers had laid before the House His Majesty's message, which stated the great preparations making by the enemy for the invasion of this country; and a variety of reasons as to the state of the country were then brought forward, a shadow of which did not appear to exist at present. When the Habeas Corpus Act was first moved to be suspended, it was upon the Report of a Special Committee of each House, which directly stated that an actual conspiracy was then carrying on within the kingdom for the purpose of overturning the Government. The suspension had been continued in 1799, on account of the critical situation of the affairs of Ireland; but now

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their Lordships were desired to continue it still farther, without any shadow of reason whatever being adduced as an argument for so doing. His Lordship observed, that since the Revolution the Habeas Corpus Act had only been suspended three times: in the Assassination Plot in the reign of King William; in 1715, in the reign of George I.; and in 1745, in the reign of George II. the two last were periods of actual rebellion; and even then with so much danger hanging over their heads, when there were so many supporters of a disputed succession, not men of low fortunes or visionary enthusiasts, but men of the first rank and consequence in the country, who were firmly attached to the cause of that family who laid claim to the Crown;—even then, his Lordship said, so jealous were the Parliament of this great bulwark of the security of the liberties of the people, that they would not consent to suspend it but during a short time—three months. His Lordship said, that according to the present mode of proceeding of His Majesty's Ministers, he began to think this was only a prelude to making the suspension perpetual. When was there a likelihood of putting an end to it? If we might believe what had been said in another place, not till Jacobins was extinguished. He professed he did not understand what was meant by Jacobinism, unless it was a term of abuse indiscriminately thrown on every person who differed in sentiment from Ministers. If, however, said his Lordship, there are really *eighty thousand* of these incorrigibles, as has somewhere been said by a certain great master of this kind of political arithmetic; and if what has been said on another occasion be true—"that these principles of Jacobinism, once imbibed, were never to be eradicated," long indeed he feared it would be before this great bulwark of liberty and security would be restored. His Lordship highly condemned the great length of time which had elapsed since the imprisonment of the twenty-nine persons now immured in different gaols, some upwards of two years, without being brought to trial. He allowed, that persons so taken up ought, if there were just cause to suspect them, and not sufficient evidence to convict, to be confined a reasonable time in order to procure the necessary evidence; but he thought eighteen months more than a reasonable time, and some period ought to be fixed in which, if they were not brought to trial, they should be discharged. He reprobated the idea of sending them from prison to prison, which operated as a punishment before conviction. His Lordship said, he was the more strenuous in opposing the passing of the present bill, because the power of the Crown had been immensely increased, and the privileges of the people proportionally diminished, by the passing of

several strong restrictive acts. The whole property of the kingdom was also armed, and in array, at the disposal of the Crown, for the defence of the country. Vested therefore as Ministers were with such extraordinary powers, he thought it improper to increase them at the expence of the liberties of the people, and should therefore give his decided negative to the present motion.

The Earl of CARLISLE paid a compliment to the noble Lord for the very handsome and moderate manner in which he had conducted the whole of his argument; but he differed from him widely, and attributed the tranquillity we now possessed to the passing of this very act now about to be continued. His Lordship told an anecdote of Mr. Foote, who had once mentioned to him an intention of ridiculing the Greek Drama—which he meant to do by introducing a single character as the hero of his piece, and a grand chorus of soldiers, sailors, tinkers, tailors, musicians, bakers, butchers, and all descriptions of persons. This single hero was to strut about the stage—vaunt and boast of his imperial power—threaten to destroy the country with fire and sword—to storm and take the Tower, and even to dethrone the Sovereign; and the great and numerous chorus were to fall on their knees, beat their breasts, tear their hair, and supplicate this man not to put his threats in execution;—he raves again, and they supplicate to the conclusion of the piece. His Lordship said, that it appeared to him, His Majesty's Ministers would be in nearly the same predicament if this act was not continued; they would have their hands, if not tied up, exceedingly weakened. The horrid principles which had occasioned the passing of the Habeas Corpus Act, appeared to be weakened; but they were not yet got rid of. He saw no danger in trusting such a power as this in the hands of Ministers, who had always used it so mildly and leniently. That such was the case, was evident from the opinion of the people, who felt no apprehensions, nor had expressed the smallest discontent at such a power being so entrusted. His Lordship said, he hoped there would not be occasion to continue this suspension much longer; but as he was convinced those pernicious principles which had occasioned it were not yet entirely done away, he was happy in having an opportunity of giving his hearty concurrence to the passing of that act.

Lord HOLLAND said, that he had not intended to trouble their Lordships on the present occasion; but some things that had fallen from the noble Lord who had just sat down, appeared to him so exceedingly reprehensible, that he could not help taking notice of them. If the Legislature should continue to act upon the principles which he had advanced, we should never again enjoy the bless-

ings of life. Act should made no tershad the count might be display sy then it w in danger upon ful At any Habeas we were would be ing Jacob being in France. empowe time; a cessary t foreign should b for reas the stor tions of Lord h in poin have p nions, princip prove t any gro constitu but ext incumb isted? question to oper there c was in present gally v they m

ings of liberty. The noble Lord had said that the Habeas Corpus Act should be again suspended, because the people were quiet and made no complaints of the manner in which His Majesty's Ministers had exercised the powers entrusted to them. As long then as the country remained in a state of tranquillity, the same arguments might be used; and if discontents should arise, and the people should display symptoms of impatience under the yoke that oppressed them, then it would be said that the Government and the Constitution were in danger, and that it was necessary to allow persons to be taken up upon suspicion, that we might defeat the purposes of the seditious. At any rate, as long as the Republic of France subsisted, so long the Habeas Corpus Act must be suspended. It was said that although we were obliged to make peace with that State, still that peace would be insecure, and we should be in the greatest danger of having Jacobinism imported into the country, and of the people here being incited to rebel, from the fortunate termination of rebellion in France. In that case, therefore, it would be highly inexpedient to empower every man to demand a trial or liberation within a certain time; and, while we continue at war, it will be said that it is necessary to prevent domestic enemies from seconding the efforts of a foreign foe. Was it to be endured, that a valuable privilege should be for ever withheld from the people without any reason, or for reasons completely puerile? He was highly entertained with the story which a noble Lord had related with regard to the intentions of Mr. Foote; but with all the ingenuity which the noble Lord had displayed, he could not perceive that the story was at all in point. To make it bear, it would have been necessary for him to have proved that there were powerful persons who held these opinions. Where are there any, high or low, that are filled with principles of sedition? But it was said, that it was our duty to prove that such persons did not exist, and that there was no longer any ground for alarm. This language was unreasonable and unconstitutional. When it was allowed on all hands that nothing but extreme necessity could justify the measure proposed, was it not incumbent on those who proposed it to shew that that necessity existed? Besides, it was impossible to prove the negative side of a question, and to shew that Jacobin principles had completely ceased to operate on the minds of the inhabitants of this country, though there could be no doubt of the fact. But supposing that the country was in a very critical state, he should wish to know what remedy the present act would apply to. The only powers which it would legally vest in Government, would be to retain in custody those whom they meant to try, but for whose conviction, though there could be

no doubt of their guilt, sufficient evidence could not at the moment be obtained ; or to retain those in custody who could be easily convicted, but upon whose trials the evidence which must be given it would be highly impolitic to disclose. If Ministers had only made use of these powers, and if there was a real call for the measure, he should certainly vote for it ; but they had acted on very different principles. Of the seven years of the war, the Habeas Corpus Act had been suspended five ; and of the multitudes who had been imprisoned in virtue of that suspension, few had been brought to trial, and only one convicted. Neither was that person guilty of treason against this country, or connected with any societies or any individuals of consequence in this kingdom. None of his machinations could ever have brought about rebellion or insurrection. What harm would have followed from his going over to the enemy with a paper which was signed by nobody ? Should the Constitution be suspended for years because O'Coigley was condemned ? He contended, that Government had a right to retain in custody only those whom they intended to try ; and he would put it to the conscience of their Lordships, whether more harm would have accrued from bringing to trial the twenty-nine persons now in gaol, than has accrued from suspending the Habeas Corpus Act ? But it was said to be merely used as a measure of precaution, to protect the Constitution from the evil designs of the many turbulent men who longed for its overthrow. He confessed it not improbable, that the rational principles on which the French Revolution was commenced, the plausible though pernicious doctrines which have been professed in its later stages, and the splendid success which has attended the arms of the Republic, might have dazzled many in every country in Europe, and made some in this country long to see the visionary theories of freedom reduced to practice. But was it not likewise probable, that the dreadful atrocities which had been perpetrated during the Revolution, the horrid crimes which had been committed in the name of Liberty, and the final subjugation of France to a military Government, had made many incline to arbitrary power, and adopt tory and high church principles, who were formerly animated with a hatred to slavery ? It was one of the great evils of the French Revolution, that it had brought the cause of rational freedom into discredit ; and there could be no doubt, that the antient spirit of Britons had been nearly abandoned, since they had patiently borne the most alarming abridgment of their privileges, and the most flagrant infringement on their rights. If one set of causes had operated, why might not another ? The prerogative had less to fear at present from the encroachments of

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the people, than at any former periods. Much had been said of the leniency with which Government had exercised its powers. He was old fashioned enough to think, that the good treatment of the subject should not be in the discretion of any individuals, but should be secured to him by law. The imprisonment even of twenty-nine persons was no strong mark of leniency. He should be glad to know, whether they were kept in custody to be tried, or merely to deprive them of their freedom, and to punish them for their supposed offences. He would wish to know, whether they were treated as persons who are innocent, as the law must suppose them, or as persons convicted of atrocious crimes, in which light he feared they were considered by Government. But, granting that the conduct of Ministers has been mild and lenient, yet to keep up a notion that security is owing, not to the protection of the law, but to the mercy of a few individuals, must be attended with the most unhappy consequences. Men, in ceasing from owing obligations to the Constitution, must cease to admire it, must lose all affection for it, and see without regret another erected in its stead. These were his reasons for opposing the bill. It had already been read twice; it would therefore be irregular in him now to move an amendment. His Lordship, however, was surprised that it should be proposed to continue the power of the act for so long a period. It was acting contrary to all precedent. Upon a pressing emergency an act of a similar nature had been passed in the reign of King William; but then for a very short time; and no reason could justify the suspension of the Constitution for a longer period than three months. Judge Blackstone recommended, that we should surrender our liberties for a while in order to preserve them for ever; but added, that the occasion should be very urgent indeed, and that even then we should not consent to part long with the palladium of the Constitution.

Lord MULGRAVE defended the bill. Supposing, said his Lordship, that this act had not kept down the spirit of Jacobinism, then the noble Lord's argument would have been this—"You have exerted your power, and it has produced no effect, therefore you must now take some other means." But he would contend, that this suspension had contributed to keep down this spirit, and had proved beneficial. Had not the spirit of the country been roused in consequence against this danger, and was not this of itself a proof that such danger existed? And was it not better by wise precautions to preclude the necessity of other and more rigorous measures? The circumstances of the country had not been so changed as to set aside the necessity of this measure. Negative

proofs were not demanded ; but positive ones of the conspiracies which existed were actually upon their Lordship's table. If the noble Lord did not really know what Jacobinism meant, after all the events that had occurred, he could not pretend to inform him. He might, if he pleased, speak of the French Revolution as the effects of rational Liberty ; but although this " rational Liberty" had shewn itself in the murder of the Sovereign, in the bloody and detestable tyranny of Robespierre, the noble Lord could not find out wherein consisted the spirit of Jacobinism ! With this example of " rational Liberty" before them, the conspirators in Ireland had acted. The five Directors had trodden the same ground as the bloody Robespierre, with this difference, that their tyranny was now veiled, his was more avowed :

TOM struts a Soldier, open, bold, and brave :
WILL sneaks a Scriv'ner, an exceeding knave.

And were there no existing proofs, even in this country, of a predilection in favour of this " rational Liberty?" Had not their Lordships, very lately, and within these walls, heard a noble Lord (Stanhope) in his place, disclaiming his quality, and in preference attaching to himself a title which, as it had been applied in France, ought to be held in just disgrace? Could that noble Earl have arrogated such a term (*Citizen*) to himself, unless there were at the same time a disposition in the country to flatter such prejudices? When he had heard the expression alluded to fall from the noble Earl, he could have no doubt of the tendency of such language ; and he wished that noble Earl was then in his place, to hear of his express disapprobation of it. From the general view that he was led to take of the circumstances of the country, and from the proofs upon the table, he thought that the continued Suspension of this Act was strictly justifiable.

Lord HOLLAND complained that the noble Lord had misrepresented his speech in every particular. He had never said that the French enjoyed rational Liberty : and it was rather hard that it was impossible to mention the French Revolution, without being accused as a defender of the whole tissue of crimes which disgraced it. If there was any thing in the conduct of the French which he thought laudable and exemplary, he would not hesitate to call it such ; he therefore begged that there never might be a forced construction put upon his words. The noble Lord had scraped together a few crumbs which had fallen from another House, and served them up afresh as an entertainment for that evening. He could see no reason for suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, notwithstanding

ing all the noble Lord's invectives against Jacobinism and the French.

Lord MULGRAVE still insisted, that there was nothing of rational Liberty connected with the French Revolution; and that the five Directors only pursued, in a sneaking manner, the same measures which were more avowedly and boldly acted upon by their predecessors.

Lord ELDON said, he could have wished to have given a silent vote, if he had not felt it inconsistent with his duty as a member of that House, and in a peculiar degree as being a member of a profession which was connected with the laws of the country. He could not avoid, therefore, taking notice of some of the topics which had been touched upon by the noble Lords who had opposed the motion, especially as it had fallen to his lot to discharge his duty to his country at a critical period. The noble Lord (Holland) had argued, that there was only one solitary conviction, and that in that person's case there was no treason produced against this country. But the fact was, that the person convicted was proved to have been planning with disaffected bodies of men in this country, with certain affiliated and corresponding societies, for the destruction of the British interest in Ireland; and surely the noble Lord need not be told, that a person attempting to sever the Crown of Ireland from that of England, is guilty of an overt act of treason against the King of this country. The noble Lord had represented that man (O'Coigley) as an unconvicted traitor; but subsequent events had proved, that though the law of evidence would not permit persons to be convicted on the record, yet, in point of prudence, they might be viewed as so implicated in the guilt, that the Legislature would be fully justified in taking such steps as would prevent the machinations of such men, whose measures must endanger the safety of the community. His Lordship said, he spoke upon the most conscious persuasion, that if this Suspension Act had not passed, their Lordships would not have been at this time within that House to deliberate on this or any other act, or at least that their existence would have been endangered. The noble Lord had argued, that none should be apprehended but such as could be brought to trial; but his Lordship should know that cases might occur, as they had already occurred, in which, for want of two witnesses, persons could not be legally convicted, when at the same time no doubt could remain of their guilt. Let noble Lords recollect what had passed in Ireland: there, where the law in cases of high treason only required one witness, a person (his name he had forgotten) feeling that he had embarked in a project ruinous to his country, and founded on the

breach of every political duty, had the merit (for so he would call it) of being the informer, a circumstance which had led to the detection of the whole conspiracy. But would the noble Lord say, because in this country a person could not be put upon his trial for high treason without the testimony of two witnesses, that therefore no danger existed? With regard to what had passed at Maidstone, would the noble Lord argue, that, because no sufficient legal proof could be brought against any but one of the men who were put upon their trial, the Legislature should have sat still, and not endeavoured to prevent the mischief, where there were such grounds for suspicion that the French Directory were tampering with disaffected men to destroy the Constitution of this country? In a case of that new description so dangerous, and the plot so artfully combined, was he to shut his eyes against the danger arising to the country, or refuse to make a legislative provision, of a nature as temperate as circumstances would admit? He would venture to say, that to the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was owing the preservation of the Crown in the race of the House of Hanover; and by this very act, late and former conspiracies had been broken to pieces. But he must observe, that the lenity of former reigns and governments was not to be compared with what had taken place in this reign. It was this which gave value to the British Constitution, that it was not founded on that theory which God never intended man should adopt as the rule by which he should act as if he were a perfect creature. The law of England looked on man as encompassed with faults and vices: it went on this principle, that in general the existing provisions should be such as to secure to the utmost the liberties of the country; but in pursuing this object, it considered also, that it had to do with men as they are, and that it was the duty of the community to submit to a temporary deprivation of privilege, in order the more effectually to enjoy the liberties of the British Constitution.

The question being then put, the House divided—For the question, 30; Against it, 3.—Majority, 27.

The bill was then read a third time.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, February 27.

Nothing material occurred this day.

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HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, February 28.

The royal assent was given by commission to the bill for continuing the Suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, to the Scotch Distillery Bill, and to three private bills.

It was ordered, on the motion of Lord Auckland, that the resolutions of the 20th instant, respecting economy in the consumption of bread, flour, &c. be printed from time to time.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, February 28.

The House received a message desiring their attendance in the House of Peers, on which they attended; and on their return, the Speaker acquainted the House that the royal assent was given by commission to the bill for Suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, to the Scotch Distillery bill, and to three private bills.

In the Committee of Supply, the sum of 200,000*l.* was voted as a grant for enabling the Commissioners to liquidate the national debt. The Report was ordered to be received on Monday.

In the Committee of Ways and Means the Chancellor of the Exchequer moved, that the sum of three millions, paid into the Exchequer for the renewal of the charter of the Bank of England, should be applied towards the supply. The resolution was agreed to, and the Report ordered for Monday.

Sir JOHN ANDERSON presented a petition, signed by 1619 Liverymen of London; setting forth, "That the petitioners deeply lament the calamities inseparable from a state of war, more particularly those which have arisen from the present conflict, seeing not only the honour, but the very existence of all that is dear to a nation, depends upon its successful termination; and that at a common hall of the Livery of London, assembled on the 19th instant, a petition was voted to the House, containing sentiments not founded in fact, and consequently repugnant to the feelings of the petitioners, for which reason they have dissented, and do dissent therefrom; for they deny that a series of the most melancholy events and unexampled misfortunes have attended His Majesty's arms. on the contrary, surrounding nations bear testimony to the zeal and bravery of His Majesty's troops, and the world looks with astonish-

ment and admiration on the success which has every where attended the British navy ; nor can the petitioners attribute to the war the scarcity arising from an uncommonly bad season ; nor is it possible for them to admit as a fact the assertion, that destructive expeditions have produced the most serious effects upon the commerce and manufactories of the country, as they well know both to be in a most flourishing situation ; and that, anxiously desirous as the petitioners must be for the return of tranquillity, yet it is a duty which they most readily follow, to submit to the wisdom of the House and His Majesty's Executive Government, the measures, the time, and the means for procuring to the nation a just and permanent peace ; for all which the petitioners most humbly pray."

The petition was ordered to lie upon the table.

Lord SHEFFIELD renewed his observations on the general distress of the country arising from the alarming scarcity, and said that, from the variety of opinions of different men on the remedy, he was at present at a loss to come to any decision on the subject. It was his intention, as soon as possible, to be explicit on it, as the danger of delay was more and more to be apprehended, lest it might (from any oversight of those whose duty it was to propose effectual remedies) lead men into extravagancies, which might endanger their lives. He hoped he should be able to obtain a more effectual relief from instituting an inquiry, and promised to bring forward his plan on Tuesday next.

Mr. TIERNEY then, prefatory to a motion respecting the restoration of Monarchy in France, spoke to the following effect:—" Sir, if I do regret that the noble Lord has deferred bringing forward a motion which must be interesting to all of us, still I have to attribute it to the notice of that motion given yesterday by his Lordship, that, on this evening, more than on other occasions when I have had the honour of addressing you, there is a full attendance of Members. I am happy, Sir, to observe it so, because I am quite certain no question is more truly important than that which is involved in the motion I am to submit to you this night. It is true the question is not entirely a new one ; it has been debated over and over again, in different forms, and under most trying circumstances. And when I consider that the subject has been very fully discussed on former occasions, if the impression of gentlemen's arguments, as they affected me, had corresponded with the feelings disclosed by the gentleman over against me—if the views opened to my mind had been the same as those apparently exhibited to the minds of others, I certainly would not trouble the House on this occasion. But from all consideration of the subject—from all re-

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collection of what is past—from all I know of the situation of this country—from what is known, indeed, to every man, not only of the situation of this country, but the whole of Europe, I conceive myself called on to bring the House to a decision, if to a decision it can be brought on such a subject—to a definitive vote as to the genuine object and the real principle of the war in which unfortunately, along with the greater portion of Europe, we are engaged. His Majesty's Ministers have been called on, times out of number, to name to the House and the country what is the actual object for which they contend. Nothing distinct and conclusive is to be drawn from them on this point. They attempt to define it; but they rather crowd the question with incongruous explanations, than satisfy and convince any thinking mind. We have heard them asked, if this be a war for the restoration of Monarchy in France; and the answer has been, that that most undoubtedly is nearest the wishes and most in the thoughts of His Majesty's Ministers. But we have again heard it denied, that the inference is fair, from any thing the honourable gentlemen have said, that the war is carried on for the restoration of Monarchy in France. For myself I do believe in my conscience it is carried on for no other purpose. I have been told it was carried on for security. I do not perfectly understand what it is gentlemen really mean by security. They think that a war of security, which possibly I consider a war of insecurity; they think that a good cause, which I consider a most cruel contest. When, therefore, they tell us that the war is carried on for security, I own it does not satisfy me, because it is a most loose mode of stating any object. Certainly it is a popular thing enough to talk of security. Certainly nothing can be a better ground of war than security. No man will on such abstract points think of dissenting from the right honourable gentleman. But it would be just as plausible for Spain to declare before all Europe, that she will not make peace with us until we give up Gibraltar, because the possession of Gibraltar may be necessary to the security of that nation: or in us, on the other hand, it had been as just to insist on the surrender of Gibraltar when in possession of Spain, because we considered the possession of it by us as necessary to our security. Security may be urged by every nation with equal propriety, as the pretext for continuing expensive and ruinous wars. The right honourable gentleman has availed himself of a phrase which undoubtedly sounds well, and is in itself grateful to mankind; but with him, when talking to us of security, it is only using an indirect method of evading the giving a distinct answer to a most important question. I am afraid, Sir, this language subjects me to some hazard of being

misunderstood. Indeed I have been in more than one instance accused of entertaining sentiments which it would be honourable to no Englishman to cherish. I know it has been said, that my object is not the security of this country, that I do not exclusively desire to witness the success of measures undertaken to give safety to Europe, but that all I struggled to achieve, all I am solicitous of aiding, is the preservation of the Republic of France. Such assertions are loose, and it is easy to refute them. As to my sentiments respecting the form of Government existing in France—as to what are not my opinions on the wisdom or the folly of wishing for the preservation of the Republic, gentlemen are aware that it is not necessary to go into those subjects in the House of Commons. But whatever are those sentiments, whatever may be those opinions, I do say, there is no man, in this House or out of it, more attached to the Monarchy of this country than I am. It is a part of the Constitution. It is essential to the existence of Freedom amongst us; and the rights of the people are only well guarded, while that great branch of our standing polity is endowed with its legitimate vigour, is invested with its proper authority, is possessed of its rightful power. My veneration for our Monarchy is no fashion that I have adopted for convenience, it is not affectation; it has grown up with me, being part of that education which, as an Englishman, has taught me to value not a single part only, but the whole of the constituted authorities of the empire. I am, therefore, Sir, from education and from habit attached to our Monarchy. But it follows not from thence, that I am to be in love with the House of Bourbon. I think I cannot revere that House, and preserve my loyalty to the House of Hanover. The interests of the two families are marked and distinct, but not either more marked or more distinct than they are remote and different. I hope, therefore, it will not be repeated this night, that I am wanting in every proper sentiment of affection for the Monarch—that I am unmindful of the interests of my country. If I am arraigned on those points at all, let it not be in the form of detached and indirect accusations; but rather let gentlemen have the kindness to exhibit their charges under an aspect that will at least render it not uncertain what is the accusation, so that I may have an opportunity of meeting it directly. Thus much, Sir, it was necessary for me to attempt, to dispose the House to give me credit as wishing well to my country, and to its cause, however we may differ as to the means of promoting its welfare. With respect to the motion which I shall presently take the liberty of submitting to you, the object of it is, to bring the House to a vote on that declaration in the note of Lord Grenville, which avows the

object of the war to be the restoration of the hereditary line of Princes. Gentlemen may say what they please in their speeches, but that paper is not to be answered by words uttered with warmth here; not by petulant, ill-judged and vapid declamation; not by florid and impassioned eloquence; it is only to be answered by a public document. The vote of this House disclaiming that rash, and, as I must ever consider it, most impolitic declaration, would be an authority that could not fail to satisfy all men; it would pass current in this country, in France, and throughout Europe, as the recorded renunciation, by the British Parliament, and by the British Minister, of the wildest project that ever was cherished by ambition—of the most unjust principle that ever was avowed by any Government. Wherever that memorable state-paper has been read with attention, the inference I am sure was inevitable, that in truth His Majesty's Ministers have genuinely no entire object for which they would think it worth the risk to contend, except the restoration of Monarchy in France. That the paper has been much read out of doors, I do not doubt; and that it was read universally with disapprobation of its principal topic, I as little doubt. In this House it has been read attentively, or not read at all. If it has been read with an even unbiassed mind, the deduction from it must have been as I have stated; prejudice, and the attachments of party, give indeed a colouring and glow to the subjects, in the contemplation of which that prejudice and those attachments are to be sharpened and exerted—a colouring which will cause a total misapprehension of the character of all opinion, a glow which is to dazzle but to deceive, when considering the tendency of any measure. The right honourable gentleman, with an entire dominion over language, is so gifted, that even the most direct and conclusive arguments, re-stated by him, are to lose their genuine nature, and to assume, to superficial thinkers, a form that is to cut them off from all relation to that body of reasoning of which they originally formed a part. It was by such means that he succeeded on many occasions in attempts to mislead this House. By such means has he so often, and with success, rallied Parliament on his side, while asking for supplies to carry on a war, the real object of which he has with so much caution disguised or concealed. I always wished to hear it avowed in language, that the people of England, that all Europe, could understand what was that real object. But never, until the discussion for the vote for the subsidies to Russia, did the right honourable gentleman speak out. On a recent occasion, indeed, he has thought proper to declare his opinion of the propriety of carrying on the war for the restoration of the House of Bourbon. In

the state paper which I have alluded to we meet with that opinion, and unfortunately it rests there on authority that we are not permitted to disclaim. It has received the seal and sanction of one of His Majesty's principal Ministers. But if the authority be high, the interest produced in the public mind by the avowal of such sentiments has been ardent and eventful. A great many who wish well to His Majesty's Government, who zealously and with all their heart support that Government, read that declaration with deep disgust. I am sure I correctly represent this matter. Many again who disapproved of the overture of France, who were not disposed to recommend negotiation because that overture was not for a general peace, regretted the imprudent publication of such sentiments, and were and are of opinion, that that passage, especially in the note of my Lord Grenville, where the restoration of the House of Bourbon is avowed as the chief object of the war, is very injurious to the interests of this country, and an obstacle to peace. However, therefore, gentlemen may express themselves here—in the world, out of doors, I am quite convinced that declaration is and has been most generally lamented. I have conversed in private with many gentlemen, who think it perhaps incumbent on them to vote with Ministers, yet who did not approve of that paper. What then do I wish for this night? Only that this House might cancel for ever sentiments which it neither consists with good policy, nor with the rights of nations, to cherish and act upon. I wish Ministers to agree to a resolution, declaring that the war is not carried on ultimately and exclusively for the purpose of restoring Monarchy in France. I must suppose, that if Ministers have been sincere in their assertion in that paper, they carry on the war for no other purpose; and until it is retracted, until the effect of it is obviated by a document as public, breathing an opposite spirit, and stating a more legitimate object, I think you look in vain toward peace. Do gentlemen expect it from the arms of the allies, that France shall be so humbled as to accept on her knees any terms Ministers may choose to offer. It is idle to think of it. I cannot see how gentlemen expect that this campaign—that another campaign, is to end in peace. We are told, that the country approves of the war; and a petition has been presented this day, which gentlemen will probably quote in support of that assertion. I think the petition will do gentlemen not half the good they would ascribe to it. The petition states, that our situation is flourishing, that our commerce is increased, our strength unimpaired. Be it that these general assertions are true—be it that our condition is just what these dreamers describe it—I contend, that the petition autho-

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rises us not to conclude that it expresses the opinion of the city of London, and certainly not a proof that that metropolis approves of the war. Government, supported by all its friends, with time to canvas, get a petition, originally brought forward by one of their particular adherents, a Mr. Kemble, signed only by 1619 persons out of 8,000, the number the Livery consists of. Such are not the arguments that can satisfy plain men. After seven years of war, it is now felt to be necessary not to protract to a distance the possibility of peace. I will not this night debate with gentlemen the time and the manner of proposing or agreeing to negotiation; but it becomes us to consider, notwithstanding the eager passion of the War Secretary for the contest, that in those seven years there has been raised in taxes of one kind and another, the Income Tax, &c. no less a sum than 187 millions. Let gentlemen reflect on this. Let them remember, that the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) himself has rated the annual expences of the country at sixty millions, while the total expences of the year ending the 1st of January 1801, will amount to the fearful sum of 63,400,000l. If then the House would but read with attention the recorded resolutions of the right honourable gentleman, and read the pamphlet of his friend near him (Mr. Rose), where it is stated that the peace establishment cannot be less than 32,500,000l. per year; if it is considered, that the Income Tax is mortgaged for 56,000,000l. of stock; if all this be considered, is it asking too much to request that the House will support a motion which has for its object to remove what is a very material obstacle to peace? I do not desire Ministers to hurry to that peace, to court the power of France—but to cancel opinions which, on account of the people of England, and of many even in France itself, I am sure it will be our best policy to abandon for ever. Frenchmen cannot be cordial towards us, with such a note as Lord Grenville's circulating through Europe. Instead of dividing, that manifesto united them. A war for security is indeed a just war. The present may be a war into which we originally engaged as a war of security; but as it now stands, it is neither just nor necessary. To prove that it is not just, I need only remark, that it is carried on for the purpose of restoring the Bourbon family; in saying this I am supported by my Lord Grenville's note.—[Here the honourable Member read extracts from the note, and the letter of the French Minister; and from the admissions of both drew arguments in support of his opinion.]—As to the war being unnecessary, much more may be said. I think it right to remark here, that unless Ministers prove it to be necessary, it is worse than nothing, it is dangerous and useless, and for

myself I would much rather that they would declare at once for the restoration of the Bourbons, than leave the whole object and end of it loose and undefined. The note declares enough to make every Republican feel, on the one hand, that nothing he can do will restore him to your confidence; and on the other, every Royalist must perceive, that he cannot depend on ultimate support from you. The effect of the note is, in fact, either to unite all France so powerfully in her armies, that you must fail in all attempts to subdue her; or to drive and hurry the people to such desperation and distraction, that, as a settled Government, you cannot treat with them. By the restoration, you do not get security; and if you fail in the enterprize, what do you? Why, when you would enter on negotiation with the Republic, you cannot begin your work until you have abandoned and disavowed that declaration. This threat of Royalty, for such it really is, is absurd. Will the right honourable gentleman tell us, he wishes to restore the Bourbons, that he may destroy Jacobinism? It was the tyranny of the Bourbons that introduced Jacobinism; and the attempt to restore them will be the means of reviving that now dormant spirit. Jacobinism is remembered in France as a means by which she has gained the great object of all her struggles, an equality of rights; and surely gentlemen do not require to be told, that there are no weapons so formidable against the hereditary rights of Princes, as the abstract rights of man. France will coalesce again for her own security. You distract her now; can you expect, if even you do restore Royalty, to make a secure peace with a nation divided as she will be in such a crisis? What are we to gain by restoring a weak and feeble Monarchy? Do you mean to protect it? You will incur an expence that will prove ruinous. But as an Englishman I do not wish for the restoration of Monarchy in France. That unfortunate Monarch, the last of her Kings, whose death was the cause of this unfortunate war, though a virtuous and amiable Prince, did as little for the security of the peace of Europe as the most despotic and restless of her Monarchs. In the American war, a speech of His Majesty to the Parliament, delivered at the opening of the session of the year 1778, unfolds, in language truly forcible and descriptive, the character and the policy of the House of Bourbon.—[The clerk here read the speech from the Journals.*]—I mention that speech to shew what was the disposition of the Court of Versailles at that time; and are not we told in it, that that Court was the disturber of the peace of Europe, bringing every calamity on nations; not our insidious enemy only, but open and declared, avowing their support of the

* See Debrett's "Parliamentary Papers," Vol. II. p. 293.

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Americans. Can, then, any form of Government be more dangerous than that which violated the rights of Sovereigns, stirred up sedition against governors, and armed and clothed traitors, as they were styled, against legitimate authority. The same spirit actuated the Court throughout. Were not their projects against India discovered soon after the peace of 1783? I believe, Sir, the intercepted letters which opened to us the history of those gigantic projects are at the Board of Controul. In 1787, did not the Court of France exert all its powers of intrigue to drive the Stadtholder out of Holland? Has not the greatest Republic in the world arisen from the ruins of that ambitious house, the House of Bourbon? But the Stadtholder has no interest in restoring that family, and I am sure England has not. We may have an interest in destroying the Republic; but we should have the same interest in destroying an overgrown and ambitious Monarch. No, says the right honourable War Secretary; restore Monarchy, and you gain security to yourselves.—[Mr. Windham nodded]—“The gentleman nods assent. I am correct therefore. The speech of the Secretary of State (Mr. Dundas) was not so bold. He administered the salvo, “that there are changes besides the restoration, with which His Majesty would be satisfied.” The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt), who wraps what he says in more words than any other man, if I understood him at all, is to be satisfied with nothing without the restoration of Monarchy.—[Here Mr. Pitt appeared to dissent.]—But, Sir, in the absence of direct proof, it is justifiable to bring forward presumptive evidence; and a fair presumption respecting the real views of Ministers arises from the publications of writers in their pay. I shall produce strong evidence of this sort by quoting a pamphlet of Mr. Bowles, intituled “Reflections on the Political State of Society at the commencement of the year 1800.” This writer must be considered in the pay of Government, because he is a Commissioner of Dutch Prizes; and he, with great force of language, strenuously contends, that the restoration of the Bourbon family is essentially necessary to the peace and security of Europe.—[The honourable gentleman here read a short extract from Mr. Bowles’s pamphlet.]—But, Sir, there is a stronger evidence still, indeed the strongest evidence of all, to prove the truth of all I have asserted on this subject—I mean our treaties with Russia. As to the object of Austria, we know only that it is exclusive power and aggrandizement; we are not cordial with her; we expressed indeed our admiration of the victories of the Archduke; but it was Russia whom we emblazoned as our most faithful friend and ally. The declaration of Russia sufficiently discovers

her principles and views.—[Here Mr. Tierney read the Declaration.]—“She has withdrawn her forces from Germany; which I must suppose is in consequence of the failure of her projects, and the fulfilment of that which might be considered as prophetic, “that she would withdraw her forces if the states of the empire should not co-operate, &c.” The forces of that nation, engaged to us by treaty, on the contrary, continue, as I understand, in our pay; if so, the object of the Cabinet of St. James’s is the same as that of Russia, the restoration of the Bourbons, &c. Another reason for considering that alone to be our object, is the presence of the Count d’Artois. There is no other person in this country with whom Ministers can advise on the object of the war; and they can only consult with him on the means most likely to prove effectual for the restoration of his family. The other emigrants of distinction living here are merely the old servants of the Crown, who are perhaps consulted as to their opinion, but who cannot be considered as principal movers in such a design. Now, as to that august personage, I have too high an opinion of him to suppose that he would lend himself to consultations that had not that for their object; he would not, I am sure, mislead his followers.”—[Here the honourable Member dwelt shortly on the subject of the support afforded to the emigrants by Government.]—“With respect to the clergy, large as is the allowance to them, I think it well bestowed; but then, while this country gives with a liberal hand, I would expect that our liberality would at least meet with the return of gratitude. To be plain, I do not like so much intrigue as many of the emigrants are supposed to carry on. They would turn the Court of Great Britain into the Court of Coblenz. I cannot see, without disapprobation, our Court becoming the focus of the cabals of those men. I mean not, however, to use any harsh language. I throw out these remarks rather as a kind of hint. The people of England are naturally and habitually jealous of France, but especially of such cabals. Putting together then all the arguments I have used; in the recollection of all the facts I have stated, does any man suppose the object of Ministers is not the restoration of the Bourbons? But does any man believe it practicable? Do you expect all at once to change the nature and property, and to suppress the spirit of equality in France? I do not talk of equality for England. We have a perfect Constitution, and with a wise and prudent Administration might perhaps enjoy all the liberty we are fitted to possess. I do not talk of equality on my own account, for it would not benefit me at all. But the equality I talk of is that which in France has succeeded the extreme and oppressive

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inequality that existed under the old Government, when if a man, though truly respectable otherwise, acquired his property in trade, it was deemed an insult if he proposed marriage with a woman of a noble family. Do you suppose that, having destroyed that inequality, France will return under the yoke to the toils and humiliations of the Monarchy? And if you should succeed, will it be believed that the old Monarchy, with all its appendages and trappings, would not be restored? Will it be believed, that that abominable tyranny will not be restored."—[Mr. Windham repeated the words 'abominable tyranny.']—"I call it an abominable tyranny, Sir—and Sir, would not that be a most tyrannical Government under which, with all his talents for war, and great they are undoubtedly, the right honourable gentleman could not have risen to his present place?"—"A laugh."—"He would want the charm of noble birth to make his ascent easy, nay practicable. From what I know of the right honourable gentleman, I consider such a barrier to getting into place no trivial one, even in his mind, against the resurrection of that tyranny. But, Sir, it will be said that we are to subdue France by force. The force of Russia? Russia cannot bring force sufficient. We cannot now send as great armies into the field as we have in the beginning of the contest. We in vain expect to succeed by distracting France in the interior. Against all experiments of this sort we have experience and the evidence of facts, accumulated in a fruitless (fruitful indeed in disasters!) seven years war. We have seen all kinds of revolutions in the Republic, but not one of them has brought back the Monarchy." Here the honourable gentleman returned to the consideration of the justice and necessity of the war, and asked again, "Suppose we fail? The Emperor of Russia will go home; we can have no reliance on Germany; we shall be at the mercy of a people we have irritated, whom we have been always irritating—with what temper will they treat? To please you, perhaps, they would have removed the Corsican Adventurer, as you call him, for the sake of peace. And here, Sir, I must observe, that it was not worthy of the Prime Minister of a great nation to descend to personal invective and altercation with the Great Consul of France—invective that was only remarkable from the splendour of diction, from the captivating fascination of that eloquence of which the right honourable gentleman is so consummate a master. I do not say, Sir, that the final object of Ministers may not justly be the restoration of Royalty; my only desire is, that we should this night record it, as the determination of this House, not to carry on the war with that for its immediate object. I hope gentlemen do not mean to meet my motion with

the previous question. If they do, I shall lament it; because I believe the country would rather that the House should at once declare that the war is carried on exclusively for the restoration of Monarchy in France, than find the object of it unavowed and undeclared. I do not ask Ministers to change their sentiments of the origin of the war, or to give up their invective against Bonaparte: I ask for a distinct vote, declaratory of a precise object.—[The honourable Member now recapitulated the topics of his speech, and concluded,]—I hope the right honourable gentleman will agree to my motion—I hope he will not reply to me in terms like these, ‘I am afraid if the House adopts the motion of the honourable Member, he will acquire such a degree of honour, that it will be imprudent in me at any time to oppose him.’—“*A laugh.*”—I move you, Sir, “That it is the opinion of this House, that it is both unjust and unnecessary to carry on the war for the purpose of restoring Monarchy in France.”

The motion being read by the Speaker, was seconded by

Mr. JONES, who, in conformity to his sentiments, and in the full possession of that portion of reason and judgment which God had been pleased to give him, could not but recommend and approve the motion of his honourable friend. No man, he said, more condemned the French Revolution, nor bore greater enmity to Jacobinical principles, than he did. He could not, however, approve of the continuance of war for the purpose of reinstating the Bourbon family, which appeared at present to be its ostensible object; a family, he said, by whose misconduct all the horrors of the Revolution had been produced. He had voted at one time against peace with France; but there was a wide difference between asking for peace, and acceding to an offer of negotiation which might lead to it. After eight years of expensive war, the propositions of the First Consul of France for peace were contumaciously rejected; in preference to which, Ministers chose to lavish the blood and treasure of this country on the precarious hope of reinstating the expatriated people of France in all their antient rights and privileges. He did not speak this out of any disrespect to the Emigrants; he had known and respected many, and, as far as he was able, some he had relieved. While Jacobinical principles remained, no man supported the war more strenuously than he did; and if they should again revive, he would again be an advocate for the like expedient to prevent their growth; but at present he believed them to be pretty nearly extinct. We, he said, had contributed to place a despotic Monarch on the throne of France, who could therefore more than any other decide promptly on any mea-

sure he chose, whether of peace or hostility. Ministers had held out as their favourite object the restoration of the antient Monarchy in France ; as an Englishman, he could never approve of their conduct. Even if he had a predilection for the Bourbon line of Princes, he should be unwilling that England should be ruined by attempting their restoration. Two hundred millions had already been spent to accomplish that purpose, and two hundred more were understood as ready still to be thrown away on that fruitless endeavour. To oppose and depress the Bourbon family, one hundred and fifty millions had been added to the national debt ; and to re-establish them in their lost honours, we have already added to it one hundred and fifty millions more. Should Ministers at last succeed in their endeavours, he thought there would be no better pledge of the good faith or friendship of that House than existed in the days of its prosperity and power. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer knew something of Dutch nature, he (Mr. Jones) knew, he believed, something also of French nature. He did not pretend to be the advocate of Bonaparte ; he hoped he might prove a saviour of his country, and become a second Washington. Though an usurper, Bonaparte was not the first ; nor (should that be the case) the first who had benefited his country. Cromwell had been an usurper ; yet he advanced the glory of this country, and managed all its concerns, foreign and domestic, in a manner that would have done honour to any head that ever legitimately wore a crown. France made peace with this usurper, without once mentioning the line of the Stuarts—so did Holland. He did not see, therefore, why, at this time, so much should be said about the line of the Bourbons. It had been often repeated, that there was no security in treating with so recent a usurper as the First Consul, who is liable daily to be displaced. The Protector of England, at the time when he formed treaties with foreign nations, was so insecure in his new eminence, that he always wore a coat of mail ; and there was even a book published against him, called, *Killing no Murder*. This, however, threw no impediment in the way of national negotiation. The House should pause, therefore, before they wasted any more the resources of this country in consequence of any such punctilio as this. But grant, he said, that Bonaparte was an usurper, and had waded

“ Thro’ slaughter to a Throne ;”

yet it was not the duty of Ministers therefore

“ To shut the gates of mercy on mankind.”

Whatever was the fate of the present bill, he hoped gentlemen would vote, not according to their accustomed habits, but according

to their consciences, and the existing circumstances of the times. The country at large, he was sure, were weary of the war; and its chief advocates were now found only among contractors and placemen, whose interest it would be to continue it for ever.

Mr. ELLIOT rose. The question for the House now to decide was not, he contended, whether it was just or necessary to carry on the war for the restoration of the House of Bourbon. If that were the true view of it, he would have no hesitation to declare, that an attempt to impose a Government on an independent country was both unjust and unnecessary; and this principle he would extend even to France herself, though her avowed maxim of conduct, ever since the Revolution, had been unceasing hostility against the Government of every other nation. But the real question was, whether it was necessary to come to any Parliamentary declaration of this principle, under all the circumstances of the moment? Upon this point, the arguments of the honourable gentleman who had preceded him were totally inconclusive. What proof was there, that the people were, as that gentleman had contended, filled with alarm at the recent proceedings of Government, or that they had ceased to confide in that House for the direction of their interests? Where were the petitions which expressed such disquietude and distrust? One petition, indeed, of that description, purporting to be from the Livery of London, but signed by about fifty or sixty persons only, had been laid on the table. But the House had that day received a petition of a very different tendency, signed by a very large and respectable portion of the citizens, and leaving to the discretion of Parliament the time and the mode of terminating the war. The House had, from the commencement of the contest, clearly and distinctly defined its object, on our part, to be *security*; and to that object they still adhered. If the people of England were, indeed, to read only the passage of the note in reply to the French overtures, which the honourable gentleman had quoted, they might be induced to misconstrue the views of Government; but if they read the very next paragraph, they would be convinced, that neither Ministers nor the House had stated the return of peace to depend on the restoration of the House of Bourbon. (Here the honourable Member read, and commented upon, that part of the note in which His Majesty disclaims the prescribing any form of Government to France.) It was contrary to the proceedings of the House to come to any resolution founded entirely upon abstract principles; and no necessity had been urged to induce them to depart from their accustomed rule of conduct; on that ground, therefore, he would move the previous question.

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Lord HAWKESBURY rose. He said it gave him great pleasure to follow his honourable friend under the gallery, of whose motion he most heartily approved, and which he would as cordially second. The House most unquestionably had the right of active controul over the conduct of Ministers; and if they saw any thing which they considered to be wrong in their conduct, they had the right of petitioning the Crown to remove them, and to appoint others more able or more virtuous in their place. They had the right of carrying their complaints to the foot of the Throne; and this, the House must perceive, would be the more constitutional mode of acting, because by that they did not attempt to cramp and fetter the power of the Crown, as the honourable gentleman's motion did, by resolutions which in their nature trenched upon its prerogative; as by that mode they would request His Majesty that he would not trust power into hands which, either from want of ability or integrity, could not exercise it for the honour and interest of the country. But to wave all objection to the form of the honourable gentleman's motion, and to go to its merits:—The honourable gentleman had set out by assuming, that we were at war for the express purpose of restoring the Bourbon family to the Throne of France; and that Ministers would not come to any definitive confession upon the subject. In answer, he need only refer to Lord Grenville's letter—he need but refer to the many debates which had already taken place on this question, in every one of which the honourable gentleman might have heard the most unequivocal declarations, the most distinct avowals, that we were not warring for the restoration of Monarchy in France, but that we were contending for our own security. However desirable that object might be, yet it was not the exclusive one of our contest, nor the one for which alone we were carrying on the war. When he said this in answer to the honourable gentleman, he was not speaking a new language; he was not making any new declaration of the professions of their faith. In the Autumn of 1793, the same principles were avowed. In the Declaration issued by His Majesty at that time, he calls upon the people of France to endeavour to re-establish their Monarchy, as the best pledge they could give of security for surrounding nations; yet at the same time declares, that he did not require this as the exclusive means; but if they adopted any other form of Government which should be capable of preserving the relations of peace and amity, he should be ever ready to enter into treaty with them. This was the language also which had been held during every period of the war; that we were not fighting for the restoration of the Monarchy, but for our own safety and security. The honourable

gentleman next said, that this was the only distinct object which Ministers stated as the means of peace. Was not this the only object that could be stated with precision? For although there might arise many combinations of circumstances and situations in France, which would also enable them to preserve the above relations with other nations, the effect of these combinations and their durability could only be known, to use the language of Lord Grenville's note, by experience and the evidence of facts. Let the House attend to what had already passed in France; let them consider the various and rapid changes which had already taken place; there they would see that ten Revolutions had set up as many different Governments; not one of which was capable of maintaining the relations of peace and amity with other nations. Let them view the successive scenic changes in their farce of Government; and remark, that not one treaty had ever been observed by any of the ephemeral powers holding a momentary rule. Let them look at their conduct to the rest of Europe; but do not bound their views to Europe only; let them look further, and see the same principles in all their native energy extended to other quarters of the globe: then let them ask themselves, whether it would be wise or prudent to trust to the inclination or capability of such a Government to maintain accustomed relations of peace and amity, without the solid test of experience and the unerring evidence of facts? Whenever such a form of Government should arise, he was convinced in his own mind, that there would not be any obstacle on our part to protract so desirable an event as the restoration of peace. If, therefore, there was no occasion for coming to this resolution, the next question which presented itself was, how far such an event as the restoration of Monarchy in France would be a desirable event? He could not conceive how gentlemen, possessing correct ideas of justice and moral action, when applied to other cases, could possibly so far vary from themselves as not to feel that a desirable event. They might differ as to the probability of accomplishing that object; but when they agreed upon the same abstract moral principles, he could not conceive how they differed as to their application to that particular instance. When they reflected upon a Nobility plundered and degraded—a Clergy not only plundered, but famished and murdered—why did they not also think that they ought to have their property restored, and the criminals punished equally as in the case of crimes on a smaller scale? Not only humanity required this, but justice exacted it. If men carried the same moral principles into all the ranks of life, he could not conceive why they did not wish to see the injured redressed, and the guilty punished. He

admitted, indeed, that men might differ from each other as to the practicability of the measure, but as to the justice of it he could not conceive how they dissented. If the thing was practicable, he knew no principle upon which it should be neglected, unless men had previously abandoned every moral and just feeling. We were, however, told, that the restoration would not be desirable for this country; and, to support that assertion, the honourable gentleman had adverted to the former conduct of the House of Bourbon. He had been led to look into the history of the wars between this country and France from the period of our Revolution to the commencement of the Revolution of France. In the space of one hundred years he found that we had been at war thirty-eight years with France; and in looking over the causes of these wars, with pride and exultation as an Englishman, he found that justice was invariably on our side. Every man must sincerely wish that the succeeding century should not produce so many years of discord; but, taking into consideration the unforeseen contingency of human affairs, he could not hope that we should pass happier years. When he considered the improvements of that century—when he reflected upon the increase of wealth within the same period—the mildness of Governments, even those of despotic structure—and the humanity with which even wars were conducted—he could not find in an equal period so much of human happiness, and so little of human misery, in any age of the world. If we looked to former periods of the world, did we there find no calamity? In the century preceding the last, we had little war with France; but we then had equal apprehensions from another power. [His Lordship alluded to Spain.] Yes, but the honourable gentleman would say, these were Kings, and such was their ambition. Had then Republics no ambition? To leave modern times for a moment, look back to the ancient Republics; what did we there find but ambition and a lust of power? If he were directed to look at the conduct of the Republics of Switzerland, of Genoa, of Venice, he would in reply say, look at the Elector of Brandenburg; look at Bohemia and other Monarchs. The true reason, in both the latter cases, why they were not ambitious, was because they were not powerful. All powerful States were ambitious, whether they were Republics or Monarchies; and therefore this was no argument against the restoration of the French Monarchy. We were, perhaps, the only exception of a great and powerful State, which did not seek to aggrandize itself at the expence of justice and morality. The only difference between the ambition of Princes and Republics was, that in the first case it was a personal, and in the latter a popular, and

therefore a more dangerous principle. This being so, he wished the House to reflect whether the restoration of the House of Bourbon could be attended with so much danger to this country;—did they think that any other order of things could give more permanent security to this country?—least of all could they think that the present order of things in France promised either secure or permanent peace to this country. Some honourable gentlemen had said, that their principles were changed. A change had taken place, it was true; but what sort of a change?—a military usurpation, carried by the point of the bayonet, and establishing a Government, whose only existence depended upon military exploits. Was this an order of things to look to for permanent and secure peace? The honourable gentleman had also alluded to the interference of the Court of France in the contest with America. He felt upon that occasion as every man in the House, and every man in the country, not even excepting the French Royalists themselves, did. He never heard one who did not consider that conduct as unjust and impolitic; and they all agreed in asserting, that thence originated the seeds of their own Revolution. The honourable gentleman had stated this to have happened during the reign of one of the mildest Princes of the Bourbon race; and he (Lord Hawkesbury) had the satisfaction of knowing from good authority, that that Prince in his misfortunes consoled himself, not only that he did not approve of that conduct in his Minister, but that he had also opposed it with all his personal influence. All ideas of danger from the Monarchy were preposterous and absurd, compared with what we had been suffering the last ten years from the fury and madness of the Republicans. There could be no person who contemplated the course of events in the world, but must wish to see the situation of Europe placed upon its old foundations, and in the same state as before the war. Gentlemen must know, that the system that had prevailed for a century and a half could not be deranged without great and various dangers and evils to the people concerned; and that the necessary consequence of new modelling so extensive a system must lead to many wars, in which we most probably must be led, from a consideration of our interests, to take a part. The House of Bourbon must also desire to see the old system of Europe re-established; but the modern Government of France, on the contrary, had both different interests and inclinations. Their friends, their parties, their principles, were all different; and they must look forward to arrange the system of Europe on new foundations, and quite different from the antient forms. He observed this inclination in them during the last treaty at Lisle; for when Lord

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Malmesbury proposed to act upon old and established treaties, and to make the Treaty of Westphalia the foundation of the negotiation, they objected, and refused to act upon the basis which had always before been acted upon in the settlement of Europe. Another principle also induced him to wish for the restoration of Monarchy—he meant the re-establishment of religion. He was not one of those who thought that religious opinions should be severely restricted or persecuted. It was the opinion of ancient philosophers, that no great State could exist without a religious establishment. Modern days produced philosophers pronouncing other and contrary doctrines; and the experiment had been tried in France. What had it produced? Scenes of horror and dismay—it had nursed up crimes without example in former days; and even what had been supposed to be abuses resulting only from religion, had grown into far greater enormity when produced by impiety. While he was urging this, he might be told, that we had seen the conduct of Christian Princes such as to evince that they little regarded the dictates of religion. True, we had; yet religion had some influence upon them, not only in making them veil their conduct, when bad, from others; but it also sometimes induced them to palliate their conduct to themselves. Religion had that influence upon them, that they were ashamed to contemplate even their own bad deeds in their native deformity. Under these circumstances, he felt it was a great curse to find a great nation without any religion, but delivered, as the French were, to the horror of impiety and atheism. At the same time he did not state this as an argument, that without religion we could not hold any intercourse with them; but we must at least have the evidence of facts, and the test of experience, before we could with safety trust them. Now with respect to the practicability of the measure: Upon that subject no man could possibly speak with positiveness; but from one circumstance he argued well. The present Government of France stood upon no principles. The former Governments, bad and dangerous as they were, yet were founded upon Republican principles; but the present had nothing to support it. There was not a man in France, whether Royalist or Republican, that could possibly be attached to it; all parties must be hostile to it; and the French nation must see, with regret and indignation, their Rulers deposed by an artful and daring Corsican adventurer. He spoke his genuine sentiments when he said, that if that Government was destroyed, whatever form might succeed it, if it were once capable of maintaining the relations of peace and amity, he believed Administration in this country would most readily enter into treaty with it. But his

opinion most clearly pointed out, that the best ground of hope for permanent security would be in the restoration of Monarchy; and that was an event which he thought most anxiously to be wished for, from a consideration to the interest of this country.

Mr. WILLIAM BOUVERIE confessed himself alarmed at what had fallen from the noble Lord. He did not think that we were at war for the restoration of religion in France; at least he could not see that the restoration of the House of Bourbon was sure to bring with it the restoration of religion; it seemed we were also at war for the sake of humanity, because justice and humanity told us that we should restore to the Emigrants their property, and to the French Clergy their former livings. These might be the noble Lord's intentions; for his part, he would never consent that English blood and treasure should be lavished away for such purposes. He would therefore support the motion of his honourable friend.

Lord HAWKESBURY explained.

Mr. YORKE said, that it would have been a fairer mode of proceeding in the honourable gentleman opposite (Mr. Tierney) if he had first taken the sense of the House on the question, whether the war was carried on for the restoration of the House of Bourbon? and had then moved, that it was neither just nor necessary to continue it for that purpose. At present, there was no other mode of disposing of it, than by adopting the previous question; for it reduced the House to this dilemma—that by rejecting it, they would sanction the charge that the war was carried on for restoring the ancient Monarchy of France; and by adopting it, they would fetter the operations of Government. He had always supported the war on the ground that it was entered into for self-defence; and he would vote no longer for its continuance than until a reasonable security could be obtained, whether it arose from the restoration of the Bourbon family, or any other event. The honourable Member then entered into a review of the different wars with France since the Revolution of 1688, and shewed that they differed from the present, in their being directed on the part of France against some particular part of the British empire, against some one of its interests; whereas the present was directed against all our interests, foreign and domestic. That the Administration of this country entertained no purpose of aggression against France, was evident to his mind, from the fact, that in the year 1792 they had actually reduced the disposable force of this country to about 9,000 men. He justified the interference of this country in the internal concerns of France, from their having avowedly interfered in the internal affairs of Ireland

and our West-India possessions. He praised the ability and vigour with which Ministers had conducted the war, and agreed with the noble Lord who had preceded him, as to the desirableness of restoring the House of Bourbon, though it would neither be just nor necessary to carry on the war for that object alone. He concluded with stating, that he should vote in favour of the previous question.

Sir G. P. TURNER supported the motion for the previous question, and expressed his firm resolution to continue his countenance to Administration for a vigorous prosecution of the war, until they succeeded in bringing about a secure and honourable peace. The burthens which the war entailed were, indeed, very heavy, especially the Income Tax; but his love of his Country and the Constitution would induce him to bear them cheerfully.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH said, that having closely attended to the arguments of the noble Lord (Hawkesbury), he was not surprised that they should have produced on any gentleman's mind, an effect opposite to that for which they were intended. In considering the question, it appeared that the first and the main point in debate was, Whether or not the restoration of Monarchy in France were the immediate object for which we were now contending? This the noble Lord had in terms denied; but he had stated his own wishes for its accomplishment so strongly, and had laboured so much to prove those wishes to be just, wise, politic, and humane, that if he were himself Minister, no one could doubt what his own system of measures would be. Let, then, this language be combined with that of the Cabinet, and it appeared to him impossible to doubt that this restoration was the point *now* in view, the object for which the present campaign at least was to be persevered in. On what ground was this denied, but that of the qualifying clause in Lord Grenville's note, which declared, that "His Majesty did not limit the possibility of secure and solid pacification to this mode only." Giving, then, the fullest credit to this declaration, it allowed only a bare possibility, that at *some future time* a peace might be concluded without this restoration, while the preceding paragraph stated in express terms, that for the want of it we would not at *this time* even commence a treaty; or permit a truce; and that such an event would at once remove all obstacles to negotiation or peace. Could it then be maintained or pretended, that this was not the object for which at this moment we were carrying on the war? For the only other channel through which the present Rulers of France could obtain the good opinion of His Majesty's Ministers, even in such a degree as to be allowed to treat, was

pointed out—experience and the evidence of facts: and this experience was yet to be gained, and could therefore only be applied at some future period—not to dwell on the absurdity of keeping France at war in order to estimate her ability to maintain the relations of peace. On this point he would say no more, but proceed to examine the advantages proposed to be derived from the restoration of the Bourbons, as equivalents for the expence to which we were to be put to obtain it: and here he conceived it might be useful to go into some detail: for though the noble Lord might be supposed to have conceded almost every thing in allowing all our wars with France for the last century to have arisen from her misconduct, yet on this point the imaginations of gentlemen were so occupied with the present, that in general they appeared to forget all they had ever read or heard of the past.

One honourable gentleman seemed to rest his hopes very much on the chastening which the French Princes had received from adversity; but did not the conduct of Charles II. show how little this was to be relied on? Had adversity taught him private morality or political wisdom? Had it taught him to preserve external faith, or to govern his subjects on the principles of liberty? Was he not at home an arbitrary tyrant, and at the same time the mere corrupt slave and instrument of a despotic Monarch, the enemy of his country and of all its interests? Had James the II. profited more in this school of wisdom? on the contrary, was it not notorious that the profligacy and misconduct of the one was sufficient to make his restoration regretted, while the bigoted folly of the other gave birth to that revolution in which Englishmen gloried—But had it been otherwise, could it be contended that the House of Bourbon alone was capable of deriving advantage from experience? Might not those who now govern France be supposed able to draw lessons of prudence from the errors of their predecessors, those “shades which” in such quick succession had flitted away?—We had however a better pledge than this of their sincerity, there could be no doubt but that that whole country was desirous of peace: of this disposition the conduct of the rulers furnished the strongest presumption; for, as the most likely means to recommend themselves to the people, and to fix their Government, they professed their inclination to become the pacificators of Europe. Laying aside, therefore, the question of experience as equally applicable to both parties, he maintained that, from the evidence of facts, there was sufficient ground both in private interest and general policy to negotiate; and surely it would not have required any superlative talents to turn such a negotiation to our advantage. Instead of cooling the ardour of our

allies, it would have afforded an opportunity of strengthening their attachment, by shewing to the world our regard for their interest, our resolution not to abandon them, and our determination neither to grant nor accept any other than fair and honourable terms of peace. Had the French refused such terms, they would have been weakened in public opinion: had they accepted them, they must have recommenced the war, if such were their object, under the disadvantage of having all those points to regain, which they had surrendered for the sake of obtaining peace. Mr. Smith acknowledged that the noble Lord's wish to restore to their possessions and their homes, those who had been unjustly deprived of all the comforts and enjoyments of life, must meet with sympathy in every heart; and if this could be done by any moderate exertion, he should be sorry that any man who had been aggrandized and enriched by crime, should be suffered securely to revel in the fruits of his rapine; but this might be no easy task for us, and would probably be an additional injury, even to the innocent part of France, by engendering another bloody civil war, in which thousands would suffer who had had no share in the guilt; and even if the object were not merely unexceptionable, but highly desirable, yet when he was called on to vote thirty or forty millions for its attainment, it became him to consider the interests and wishes of his constituents, among whom he believed so expensive a project would not be very popular. These however were not the only grounds on which the restoration of the French Monarchy was objectionable. With it would probably be restored that train of abuses which had produced the revolution. Had the present claimant of the Throne ever renounced his pretensions to its full prerogatives? on the other hand, had not the proclamations of the magnanimous Emperor of Russia marked his intention of re-instating him in all the plenitude of despotism? Surely then it was important to recollect how that power had been formerly employed, in order to determine how far its re-establishment was calculated to ensure tranquillity and peace to England and to Europe. And could gentlemen disguise from themselves what every page of modern history teemed with? That the ambition and injustice of France, its cruelty and treachery, its violent aggressions on every weaker power, and its insidious attempts to circumvent those whom it was unable to oppress, had been perpetually complained of in the bitterest terms by almost every state between the Mediterranean and the Baltic.—“The common disturber,” “the common oppressor,” “the common enemy of Europe,” “of Christendom,” “of the Protestant Religion,” were epithets of reproach which the conduct of Louis XIV. drew

on him from all quarters: nay, such had been on some occasions the total disregard even of private as well as political morality in his Court, that, in 1692, Messrs. Louvois and Barbefieux, two of the Secretaries, were publicly charged by this government with having engaged in a project for the assassination of King William, for which execrable attempt their miserable instrument was executed. Look next to his successor—not to scrutinize every transaction of his reign, the Journals would speak the opinion of the House respecting him no longer ago than the year 1778.—We should there find France accused of “an unprovoked and unjust aggression on the honour of the Crown, and the essential interests of the kingdom, contrary to his most solemn assurances, subversive of the law of nations, and injurious to the rights of every Sovereign power in Europe;”—of “a restless and dangerous spirit of ambition and aggrandizement, which has often invaded the rights, and threatened the liberties of Europe.”—Are heavier charges laid against the Republican Government? Is Bonaparte loaded with fouler accusations. In regard to the violation of all laws human and divine, he would not hesitate to offer the *Partition of Poland*, as a transaction of which no parallel could be found in the history of France, antient or modern, monarchical or republican. This enormity had been repeatedly mentioned in Parliament, but he should not make any apology for adverting to it again, for it could not be too frequently brought forward, nor too minutely examined: however atrocious other invasions might have been, this beyond them all mocked at every pretence or plea, either of aggression or security:—in its progress it committed equal violence on all ranks and parties. The King it insulted and dethroned: of the people it murdered thousands, and riveted on the survivors those chains which were beginning to be loosened: the nobles it either mutilated, exterminated or expelled, for no other crime than that of refusing to acquiesce in the subjugation and dismemberment of their country. If Bonaparte first established and then overthrew the Cisalpine Republic, did not the King of Prussia give under his own hand to the unfortunate Sovereign of Poland, an explicit approbation of that very Revolution, which he and his co-adjutors immediately afterwards made the pretext for annihilating his kingdom. Yet with the perpetrators of these abominations we made no scruple to connect ourselves in bonds of the strictest alliance. Again, the seizure of Avignon from the Pope had been declaimed against as a characteristic injustice. Was the world then ignorant that by the French Monarchs it had been taken possession of twice or three times, and restored, not as repentant of an injury, but an object

which their magnanimous ambition deemed of too little importance to be worth attention.

The present mode of warfare was another topic insisted on. This was represented as “of a nature long since unknown to civilized nations.”—If then the devastation of the Palatinate, and a thousand similar excesses of former times had sunk into oblivion, was the ravage of Hanover by the Duke de Richelieu forgotten? Could gentlemen recollect nothing of the King of Prussia’s irruption into Saxony—had they forgotten his expulsion of the Sovereign, his bombardment of the capital—the severities, even to personal cruelty, employed to extort contributions—and beyond all, his compulsive levies of men throughout the Electorate to serve in his army, against their own Prince, their own country, their own families? and yet this man was the popular Hero of England, extolled from our press and our pulpits, and subsidized from our Treasury. These things Mr. Smith said, he did not bring to view in order to throw unnecessary odium on the character of any Prince, or of any Government, far less by their example to excuse or even to extenuate any enormities which had been practised by the French during the present contest; but in such a conjuncture, it was absurd to look only at one side, wilfully to forget all past events, to imagine violence and fraud novelties in the records of mankind, and then to allege the misconduct of the French rulers as a sufficient ground for refusing to treat with them, when similar actions had never in former instances prevented negotiation; and when in fact there was not an atrocity alleged against them, for which they might not easily produce a precedent from the history of almost every European power, and especially of that Monarchy which some gentlemen, for the sake of its superior excellence, were so anxious to restore. Another important point, however, remained to be discussed—“the present Government was *atheistic*, and the restoration of the Bourbons would restore Religion.” Religion, according to his idea of it, was not of a nature so frail and temporary, nor rested on such slight foundations as to be capable of being destroyed by a handful of Atheists, or to depend on the restoration of Monarchy for its existence: neither did he believe that there was really more Atheism or less Religion in France now, than heretofore; an established system, which was connected in some degree with the Monarchy, had indeed been overthrown; but it was notorious that the utmost licentiousness both of opinions and manners had long since pervaded, not only the Court and Nobility, but the higher orders of the clergy too; and with respect to the mass of the people, there was no reason to believe that their old sentiments or prejudices, be

they which they might, were in any great degree obliterated. What was that system, however, which some were so desirous to re-establish—was it not the very hierarchy which for centuries past had been held forth to all protestants, and to Englishmen in particular, as the object of dislike and apprehension, and, not very long since, even of abhorrence and terror—nor unjustly, when considered as a political Religion, and armed with all the strength of a powerful kingdom. As to the theological tenets of the Catholic Church, he was not very solicitous about them; every man was, in his opinion, entitled to the free and unrestrained exercise of his own judgment on such subjects, to think as he pleased, and to profess what he thought right, without being obnoxious to suspicion or molestation. But, though perpetually declaiming and inveighing against something called Jacobinism, we thought it not inconsistent to be the professed champions of Popery, whose *political* doctrines were Jacobinical in the most obnoxious sense of the word: they tended to dissolve allegiance, and destroy every social tie: Sovereigns might be attacked on their thrones, and Heretics were not entitled to good faith. These principles too had been acted on in numberless instances; they had cost France the life of her best Monarch, and had sanctioned the most nefarious attempts. Nor did the Court of Rome even yet abandon her most extravagant pretensions, or give up one atom of those powers which she had formerly claimed. But if these were vain terrors, it had yet another character more to be dreaded, as more frequently and more extensively mischievous, its spirit of persecution. Were the horrors it had occasioned in every quarter of the globe no longer remembered? if the revocation of the edict of Nantes was forgotten, did we know nothing of the attempts made to revive those scenes under Louis XV? He feared, Mr. Smith said, no unarmed religionists; but, whether we formed our judgments from theory or experience, he could not but regard it as the grossest absurdity, and most extravagant folly, for Englishmen and Protestants to spend their blood and treasure expressly for the purpose, among others, of re-establishing Popery in France, in all its former splendor and ability for mischief. Should it be again replied that no such objects as he had imagined were really in view, he must answer by the arguments before urged, adding only, that the whole style and tenor of our answer to the French Government afforded strong presumptions in his favour, for it could hardly be supposed that men of so much talents as those who composed the British Cabinet, would gratuitously indulge themselves in such language as appeared directly calculated to alienate, to irritate, and to disgust, if they had not previously deter-

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mined against negotiating with the parties. To prevent the ill consequences of a resolution so rash and unwise, neither grounded in policy, nor justified by precedent, was the only object of his honourable friend's motion; and for the various reasons he had alleged, he thought it his incumbent duty to give it his support.

Lord BELGRAVE said, that the answer to Bonaparte in Lord Grenville's note was so plain and direct, that he should have thought it could not have been misunderstood. It was not his intention to enter into a discussion with the honourable gentleman (Mr. Smith) as to the merits or demerits of the Catholic religion, which he had so amply criticised, but he would remark, that, whatever were its faults, it was certainly better than no religion at all. Neither would he follow the honourable gentleman into a disquisition respecting the ambition of the House of Bourbon at different periods of history, when the Princes of that House were stated to be disturbers of the repose, and invaders of the liberties of other countries; for let their ambition have been what it might, let it have been as flagitious as the honourable gentleman had represented it to be, still he would assert their flagitious ambition could not have equalled that of the Robespierres and Bonapartes who have exercised their despotism in France.

It appeared from Lord Grenville's note, and from every expression of Government, that, although the restoration of Monarchy in France was the most desirable thing that could happen, because it would bring repose to France, to England, to Europe, and to the World, as far as the influence and power of France and England extended, still that it was not considered as the *sine qua non* of peace; that there were other circumstances, which it was impossible exactly to define or foresee, which would also lead to the same object; that it was true, at the late communication, that the restoration of Monarchy was the only mode that then presented itself of obtaining security, because the armistice would have terminated in delusion and disappointment, if we are to rely on experience.

The honourable gentleman blamed his honourable friend (Mr. Yorke) for entering into a discussion which he considered irrelevant. If his honourable friend had not had an opportunity of delivering his sentiments on the general subject of the war before, sure there could not have been a more proper occasion for his doing so than on the present motion; but the honourable gentleman (Mr. Smith) had scarcely made the remark before he himself entered much more fully into the general question than his honourable friend had done. On the general topics he (Lord Belgrave) should only say, that as

the House had determined, and wisely determined, to support the Government in the continuation of the contest, he had the consolation of thinking, that there never was a period from the beginning of the war, from the beginning of time he might say, when England was more powerful both in her fleets and armies; there never was a period when the loyalty of the country was more conspicuous, when the flame of patriotism burnt brighter in every bosom, when there was a greater detestation of the wicked principles of France, or a greater conviction of the magnitude of the objects for which they were contending: our ally, the Emperor of Germany, too, was organizing vast armies in Italy and on the Rhine, which were formidable not only from their numbers, but also for their military discipline, their military prowess, their military glory. Thanks to the liberal policy of this country, Bavaria too would lend all her forces, and Franconia and Swabia were risen in a mass and preparing for the combat. We had, too, no inconsiderable ally in the Royalist Provinces of France—which, although many of their Chiefs had been obliged, from circumstances, reluctantly to capitulate, could never be considered but as a thorn, and that a sharp one, in the side of the usurper of Paris; for under every change they had been rootedly in favour of their ancient and legitimate line of Monarchs.

The honourable gentleman had talked of the perfidy of the House of Bourbon; but, supposing the present head of that House disposed to perfidy and ambition originally, is nothing to be learnt from the school of adversity? He has drank deep of the cup of affliction—he has read a bitter but instructive lesson in what has been said to be the best school of wisdom; but if it is true, that

“ Sweet are the uses of adversity,

“ Which, like a toad, ugly and venomous;

“ Yet wears a precious jewel in his head;”

then we might expect that Louis the Eighteenth will have benefited by such severe instruction. At all events, however, is it not likely, that, after his restoration, a long interval of peace may be fairly expected by this country and Europe? It is undoubtedly his interest, and there is nothing in his character that appears to bely the expectation.

It had been said, that the restoration of Monarchy is not practicable: Now upon that he thought it not improper to consider what was the probable disposition of the people of France. He would consider whether that disposition leant towards what was called the Republic which had prevailed in France the last eight

years, or whether it leant towards Bonaparte, or whether towards the Constitution he had formed ; or, on the contrary, whether it was beginning to turn towards the former Monarchy, or whether towards that Monarchy with certain restrictions and modifications. In the first point, we must give up all the knowledge we derive from human experience, and all that we know of human nature, before we can conclude that the French people are not heartily tired of the French Republic, and all the forms of Government that have in so rapid a succession appeared under it ; unless we could suppose, what is impossible, that they could prefer discord to civil rule, anarchy to order, bloodshed to mildness, misery to prosperity.

In respect to the second part of the question, he would contend, that for Bonaparte personally, the French nation could have no real affection. Without going into a general discussion of his character and conduct, he would only remind the House, that he appeared to have made treaties only with a view to break them as interest dictated ; and that his conduct in Egypt was, from first to last, one continued act of perfidy and treachery, and especially to his army—that army, to which he ought to have been attached by every sentiment that can attach men to men ; that army which he calls his children ; that army which suffered every privation of hunger and thirst, every species of misery, disease, and death, and all to gratify his vanity and his ambition ; that army he basely deserts, without orders, at a time of their greatest need, with the assurance that he left them with *great regret*, and would return to them *forthwith*, at the same moment that he was resolved to leave them altogether to their fate. He was aware that the crisis in Egypt was approaching, and other objects of vanity and ambition excited his hopes at Paris. There can be no doubt but this shameful desertion of his companions in arms in Egypt, when it comes to be thoroughly known and understood in its true light, must operate upon the minds of those soldiers, whose bayonets he has employed to open his way to the Throne, and which alone, independent of any real affection of the people, maintained for him the power which he has by their means usurped. If it is not the person of Bonaparte, then, that is the object of satisfaction to France, we must next turn to the Constitution he has framed, and see whether that is likely to be the object of affection. He should not, he said, detain the House by going into an examination of that Constitution ; he should not inquire whether it was the most brilliant fabric of human invention and human integrity, whether its superstructure was as full of grace and ornament, as its base was likely to be secure and firm, or whether, on the contrary, it was “ the baseless fabric of a vision,”

not likely to "leave a wreck behind." These speculations he should leave to others; but he thought it material to consider on this part of the question, that, whatever the Constitution may promise from its appearance, by the breath of Bonaparte it was raised, by his breath it might be destroyed; it rose with his rise; with his fall it might decline; and therefore the attachment to the Constitution could only be in proportion to the attachment to Bonaparte; and that he had shown could not in reality be very strong, either in the people of France at large, or in the soldiery, or of any long continuance. His military reputation might have given a momentary éclat; but that had received a deep wound at St. Jean d'Acre, from the almost single arm of a British sailor.

As to the Constitution he had formed, to show how little he regarded it, he had hardly solemnly accepted it; before, as if in wantonness, he had violated one of the fundamental articles of it, that which respects the independence of the Judges, which appeared the best feature in it, which was copied from our judicial system, and which he always considered as giving the finishing stroke to the dignity, purity, and honour of British jurisprudence. By the bayonet, then, the French Consul maintained his powers, and by the bayonet the Abbé Sieyès may be placed on the Throne he now usurps. Among a variety of joint Monarchs, France has had a Law Monarch in the person of Robespierre, a military one in the person of Bonaparte, and may soon have an Ecclesiastical Monarch in that of Sieyès, out of whose teeming brain a fresh Constitution may start out armed cap-a-pée, a new object of worship to his Pagan Idolaters. A Naval Monarch would be only wanting to complete the series: but without meaning any disrespect to the other professions, such is the enthusiastic admiration we bear in this country to the naval character, that, debased as the moral character of France is at present, yet he could not suppose a successor would be found among sailors for a Robespierre, a Bonaparte, or a Sieyès, to fill the Throne of his murdered Monarch. If this picture be at all just, and who can say it is not, it not only justifies the late determination of Government and Parliament, in regard to treating with a power so fluctuating, but it surely must lead us to think, that of such an insecure and revolutionary state, France must be completely tired, and must be secretly sighing for the return of Monarchy. Could there be a more happy and auspicious moment than the present to wish to manifest such a disposition, when an entire reconciliation is said to have taken place between the different branches of the illustrious House of Bourbon, one of which had once given

but too attentive an ear to the delusive but destructive theories of the Revolution ?

There is another consideration, however, yet remaining, whether the body of the French people might not wish to see certain unpopular prerogatives, certain *droits*, relinquished, previous to the restoration of the King of France.—Here gentlemen should revert to the experience of history ; and it would be found, that there was no difficulty on the part of Charles the Second in meeting the wishes of his English subjects on that point. The tenure of wards and liveries, and the right of purveyance, were odious to the English, and they were commuted on certain terms immediately acquiesced in by Charles ; and, doubtless, the adviser of Louis the Eighteenth would as readily recommend to His Majesty to acquiesce in the abolition of any unpopular privileges.

As to the difficulty of restoring Monarchy on account of the state of property, he must *again* revert to the same period of history, and remind the House, that no difficulty of that kind was felt at the restoration of Charles the Second : certain persons had compounded for their estates ; but soon after the celebrated declaration of Breda, property reverted, as it were by magic, into the hands of the rightful owners. How long the present revolutionary system and unjust exclusion would continue, it was impossible to say ; but it was clear that France must wish to see it at an end.

Whenever questions of the nature of that brought forward this night were discussed, gentlemen who opposed the Government were very fond of laying great stress on topics which could only be introduced with fairness when there was a reasonable probability of influencing by them the majority of the House, namely, the prodigious and lavish expenditure and waste, as it is called, of blood and treasure during the war. The present scarcity, too, is frequently coupled with the other topics. These are repeated over and over again in every pamphlet and newspaper hostile to Government, and are all found concentrated in the petition that was presented on a former day by the Lord Mayor ; but which, as it abounded in inflammatory topics and false assumptions, he was happy to find, by another petition presented that day, did not speak the sense of the city of London.

If these topics were brought forward with a view to influence and inflame the people out of doors, they were highly unconstitutional and blameable ;—it was impossible to forget the mischief occasioned by the combination of the subject of war with that of scarcity of grain at the latter end of 1795, when the harvest was deficient, and which deficiency could only be caused by war, if war

could influence the seasons. He could never forget the cry of "No war! Give us peace! Give us *bread*!" when, in 1795, His Majesty was going to the House of Lords. We recollect with horror the attempt that was made on His Majesty's sacred person almost at the same moment; and it was to such inflammatory topics as these that the disaffected had recourse in order to accomplish this wicked end, by destroying the best of Princes, and ruining the peace of the happiest of nations. These were practices that ought not to be followed: the idea of arguing topics in that House, with a view of influencing the people out of it, was not only dangerous in the highest degree, but contrary to the true spirit of the Constitution: for, as the people trusted their representatives with the considerations of political affairs, not having themselves, from their necessary avocations and education, either the time or means of judging them properly, all arguments of Members of Parliament should be addressed only to the House, with a view to influence the majority, and not the people, under the pretence of addressing the House.

The only palliation of this practice that he had heard was, that Ministers had been induced to enter into negotiations at certain periods of the war, from listening to the voice of the People as different from that of Parliament. This, if true, was not sufficient to vindicate a practice so unconstitutional and so dangerous; but he denied this to have been the case.—Here his Lordship entered into a review of the periods alluded to, to show that Parliament and the Nation had always accorded in sentiment on the subject of the war.

As to the prodigious waste of blood, he said, he must deny that. We had, indeed, considerably increased our debt; but, thanks to the unparalleled industry of the country, thanks to our manufactures, thanks to our commerce, thanks to that influx of wealth, (by which, let it be remembered, land has benefited, and always must in a great, if not in an entirely equal proportion,) our resources have augmented in such a manner as to make the debt, however great, be felt as comparatively light.

As our expences have been considerable, however, our blood has been spared; and he would not ask a British House of Commons, which was more valuable, British blood, or British treasure. In fine, to that spilt in France, compared to that spilt on the part of our allies, British blood spilt in the course of the contest has been comparatively little—with the exception only of the West Indies, where our loss, indeed, had not been from the sword, but from the climate; and he was happy to hear that a new system was carrying

into execution for the defence of our islands, which would be the means of saving the lives of many of our countrymen, who, from not being accustomed to the climate, could not contend with its baneful influence.

His Lordship said, he would only add to what he was aware had detained the House too long already, that, however desirable peace might be, war was ever to be preferred to an insecure and discreditable peace. By a secure peace, he did not flatter himself with the prospect of that impracticable peace of the Abbé of St. Pierre, which was to embrace all countries at all times; the world was, he feared, not yet ripe for so beautiful but visionary a theory; but he meant a peace comparatively secure and lasting, and so we must ever reason on a subject that depends in a great degree on human passion and human caprice. When such a peace can be obtained, which will be felt by all classes of the community to be honourable and secure, and which this country can alone accede to, then may we with confidence and gratitude return the sword into the scabbard; then may we retire into the bosoms of our families, and resume the occupations of peace, fully compensated for our past sacrifice. And such a peace we should obtain, unless fear seized on the Councils, and despair the hearts of the country: but that could never happen; and therefore he looked forward to such a peace at no very distant day, either from the restoration of the Bourbon family, or some other combination of circumstances which might lead to sufficient security, with a humble but sanguine hope, but at the same time with entire resignation to the Supreme Disposer of all human events.

Colonel ELFORD said, that the motion before the House was so worded, that it was almost impossible for the House to adopt or reject it, and preserve the appearance of consistency in its proceedings, or without getting into a dilemma; if the honourable gentleman intended it, he was entitled to credit for his skill!—if the House refused to assent to this motion, it would then seem that they thought it was just and necessary to carry on the war for the purpose of restoring Monarchy to France—if the House adopted this motion, then another motion might follow, that the House should resolve that the war should not be pursued until a Monarchy might be restored in France.—Here lay the fallacy of the matter. Suppose any body should move, that it was unjust and unnecessary for Government to declare war against the Emperor of China; if the House should negative that motion, it would then appear that the House came to that vote under an idea that Government was about

to enter into a war with the Emperor of China; and by agreeing to the motion, they would seem also to be conveying an idea that some such thing was in contemplation by Government, but that it was necessary for the House to stop it by a vote. Now he could not agree to this motion, because he did not believe that Government was carrying on this war for the purpose of restoring the Monarchy of France: he believed that Government was not carrying on the war for that purpose, because he was so assured by the declarations of His Majesty's Ministers; he believed that Government was not carrying on the war for such purpose, because, in addition to the declaration of Ministers, he had documents on which to rely, which declared, that although the restoration of Monarchy was a desirable object, yet it was not a *sine qua non*. As to the argument of the honourable gentleman, that this motion ought to be adopted to calm the minds of the people, he believed there was no necessity for any such measure; for he believed the opinion of the people was not different from the opinion of that House, and that the assertion of a difference in sentiment between the People and the House of Commons upon the subject of the war, was a gross and foul calumny, not on the People, but on the House of Commons. He believed the People not only had full confidence in their representatives, but also in the administration of the Government; for these reasons he should vote for passing to the order of the day. He did not wish to vote for or against the motion, for the reasons he had already given; but as he was convinced there was no foundation for suspecting that Ministers carried on the war for the purpose of restoring Monarchy to France, he felt himself perfectly right in voting for passing to the order of the day.

Mr. HAWKINS BROWNE said, that the war was not for the restoration of the Bourbons, but for our own defence. The resolution moved by the honourable gentleman, if agreed to, would tend to disarm us of one of our best weapons, and deprive us of the aid of those in France who were attached to the cause of Monarchy. He thought the restoration of Monarchy desirable, because it would give a greater security than any form of Government which we could hope to see rise out of the convulsions of the Revolution. As to the crimes of the Bourbons, an honourable gentleman (Mr. W. Smith) had endeavoured; in a review of a period of one hundred and fifty years, to place them in the most odious point of view; but were these, with all the exaggerations, to be compared with the horrors the Revolution had produced in the short space of ten years? At any rate, he thought that another campaign like the last would bring

us much nearer the period of safe and honourable peace. The motion was in one view superfluous, and in the other dangerous. He therefore was for the previous question.

Mr. TIERNEY, in reply, observed, that in coming forward as he had done, he merely stated a distinct ground on which he wished Ministers to declare that the war should not be prosecuted—the line he pointed out was clear and distinct. It was in consequence of his inquiries, and maturely considering the subject, that he entertained little doubt of its being the intention of Ministers, in the first instance, to prosecute the war with a view to the restoration of Monarchy in France: opinions to this effect he knew pretty generally prevailed in the country; the more especially, since the publication of Lord Grenville's letter respecting the late overtures on the part of France. On a view of that document, and the line of conduct adopted by Ministers on the occasion, it was considered to be a first principle with them, that the restoration of Royalty in France would afford the best security either for themselves, or a permanent peace; and in these sentiments he was rather fortified by what fell from a noble Lord in the confidence of Ministers, who had spoken that night. With respect to the calculation made by the noble Lord, of the comparative number of years of peace and war within the last century, in which he stated a proportion of thirty-eight years of war during that period, to be attributed to the injustice of France, and argued at the same time, that, should the Republican system prevail in France, a greater proportion of years of war was to be expected; this he was not disposed to admit, at least to the extent contended for by the noble Lord. He was fully aware, that security was the most justifiable end to be proposed in the prosecution of war, and had always said so; and, in his conscience, he believed, that if even half the pains were taken to incline the people of France to peace which were used to stimulate them to war, such a peace might be made with the Republic of France as could not be easily broken. He was of opinion, that peace might be longer preserved with a Republic than with an Absolute Government; as in the latter, the question of war was more summarily decided, and easier to be acted upon. An honourable gentleman had objected to him, that the adoption of his resolution might preclude us from availing ourselves of any future wishes of the French people for the restoration of Monarchy. It could have no such effect. All he asked for was, a declaration that it was not just or necessary to prosecute the war for the object of restoring Monarchy in France. A declaration of this kind would be not only dictated by justice, but policy; for as long as threats of restoring Royalty to the French

were held out, so long would fears and jealousies be kept alive among them, and drive the people to act upon those abstract principles of the Rights of Man to which all the misfortunes of the Revolution were to be attributed. In this view, he was careful to omit touching upon any particular form of Government. The House would do him the justice to say, that he had not come forward with his proposition until all the supplies for the campaign were voted, and the subsidiary treaties arranged. He only wished that they might be applied for the end of a secure peace. With much of what the noble Lord had said respecting the state of Bonaparte's Government, he agreed; but could not coincide in his conclusions, that the result would be favourable to the cause of Monarchy in France. There was one species of security which the Government of Bonaparte possessed, and which, in the opinion of some gentlemen, perhaps, might not be the least effectual—in addition to his appointments of Grand Consul, he had the nomination of eighty persons to salaries of one thousand pounds per annum each; and, besides, the disposal of five thousand places. However, without any reference to considerations of this kind, he thought it his duty to put such a plain and distinct proposition to the consideration of the House—He here noticed the several modes in which a proposition of such a nature might be presented for the adoption of Parliament, as by way of Address to the Throne, as adopted in the case of the American war, &c. An instance offered about four years ago, in which an abstract proposition was offered to the consideration of the House, namely, “that the then form of Government subsisting in France ought not to preclude negotiation on the part of this country.” In what he now pressed for, however, he did not go to such a length; what he proposed would not go to clash with any former vote given by any gentleman, or even be hostile to their prejudices. All those who voted on the King's message might consistently vote with him on the present occasion. He only asked of Ministers to come to one clear and specific declaration respecting one point, and which he thought not only dictated by justice but by policy: the answer they opposed to it was a question of adjournment, in carrying which they doubtless would be successful, and he begged leave to wish them joy of their majority on that night.

Lord HAWKESBURY desired that the Proclamation of His Majesty in January 1794 might be read. This, he said, he did to shew that at that time His Majesty held forth to the people of France, as well as the world at large, his decided preference to a

Monarchy in that country, as likely to restore tranquillity to Europe as well as happiness to France.

This declaration being read,

Mr. TIERNEY desired also the declaration upon the subject of negotiation between His Majesty's Ambassador and the Republic of France; which was read according to his desire.

The question being then called for, the House divided,

For the previous question, - - - - - 142

Against it, and in favour of Mr. Tierney's motion, - 34

Majority, - - - 108

The remaining orders of the day were then deferred, and at eleven o'clock the House adjourned till Monday.

LIST of the MINORITY.

Adair, R.	Howard, H.	Martin, J.
Barclay, G.	Huffey, W.	Milner, Sir W.
Beach, M. Hicks	Jones, J. T.	North, D.
Biddulph, R.	Jekyll, J.	Plomer, W.
Bird, W. W.	Jolliffe, W.	Ridley, Sir M. W.
Bouverie, Hon. E.	Keene, W.	Richardson, J.
Bouverie, Hon. W.	Knight, R.	Robson, R. B.
Brogden, J.	Langton, W. G.	Sheridan, R. B.
Burdett, Sir F.	Leicester, Sir J.	Shakespeare, A.
Copley, Sir L.	Lemon, Sir W.	Stanley, Lord
Denison, W. J.	Lemon, Col.	Western, C. C.
Hobhouse, B.		

TELLERS—Tierney, G. and Smith, W.

END OF THE TENTH VOLUME.

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Churchill.

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2. Female Devotee of the Gentoo cast.
3. Coolies at dinner on the road.
4. Village Church, and Indians worshipping Polyar.
5. Church Brahmin, follower of Seeva.
6. Sepoy of Tippoo Sultaun's regular infantry.
7. Female Brahmins carrying water from the well.
8. Mausoleum of a Mahomedan of rank.
9. A Pandaroo doing penance with an iron grate round his neck.
10. An Elephant employed in forwarding a piece of heavy artillery.
11. Native officer, sepoy, and sepoy recruit of the Madras establishment.
12. A tank for supplying water in the dry season.